

California Historical Society

Quarterly

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HENRY MEIGGS

California Historical Society

Quarterly

VOLUME XVII



NUMBER 3

SEPTEMBER 1938

"HONEST HARRY" MEIGGS

*Who Left San Francisco Discredited, Later to Become
South America's Builder of Railroads*

By MARY MARGARET HARKER

IN OCTOBER, 1877, tidings reached San Francisco of the death of "Harry" Meiggs. The news was received with more than interest, for there were many then living whose financial fortunes had been affected disastrously by the transactions of this man in the early fifties. Nearly all, however, heard the news with sorrow, for this same "Harry" Meiggs had laughed at fate and had gone to a foreign land, there to recoup his fortune and repay in some measure those who had suffered financial loss through him, and to restore their confidence in the man whom they had known as "Honest Harry" Meiggs.

Henry Meiggs was born in Catskill, New York, on July 7, 1811. At the age of twenty-four he was one of the leading lumber dealers and contractors in Manhattan and possessed a moderate fortune. In 1848 he sailed with a cargo of lumber for San Francisco by way of Cape Horn, abandoning entirely his Eastern activities. It is claimed by one writer that he cleared more than two thousand per cent profit on this first load of lumber brought to California.¹

It was not long before Meiggs became a familiar figure in San Francisco. Had he lived in the present day he would have been called a "glad-hander." He was always well-dressed, prepossessing in appearance, and had a smile and kindly word for everyone, rich and poor alike. He was hospitable and generous to a fault. A contemporary described him as "plain-looking, with a tendency to corpulency, and without any appearance of being a remarkable

man; pleasant in his intercourse with everybody; active and always stirring."²

Many tales are told of his ingenuity in making money. In 1849 the laundry rates in San Francisco were eight dollars for a dozen shirts, and soiled articles were sent to China to be laundered. Meiggs knew an Australian woman of Amazonian proportions who lived with her two husky daughters. He hired them. No tubs were available, so an empty pork barrel was purchased for eight dollars; another eight dollars was expended for having it cut in half. The mighty laundresses stripped, and with the aid of a few pounds of harsh soda, trod out the soiled garments. Their first attempts were far from successful, for too much harsh soda had been used. The garments were ruined, and the three women were laid up for many days with badly burned feet, legs and bodies.³ It was not long, however, until these mistakes were rectified, and Meiggs, with the aid of the Australian women, was reaping a handsome profit.

Meiggs was a man of untiring energy, quick in making his judgments, and clear and rapid in announcing his decisions.⁴ He went into the lumber business at North Beach, being obsessed with the idea that this section of San Francisco was destined to duplicate the growth of the older part of the city. Here he built a little wharf and a saw and planing mill, bringing his lumber from his own camps in Mendocino County.⁵ Several schooners and sloops were built, and so rapidly and at such huge profits was his lumber sold that in a short time he was forced to erect a dozen mills, and to build a two-thousand-foot wharf, known as "Meiggs' Wharf," which stood until recent years.⁶

San Francisco in the early fifties was extending her streets, sewerage, and surfacing them with lumber. This work was paid for in scrip, which was readily acceptable as collateral. Meiggs experienced no difficulty in securing immense loans with which to carry on his business, since he held great quantities of this paper. Only in a few instances were limits placed upon his borrowing capacity. One writer says, "I feared or mistrusted him, and . . . I cautioned Nisbet not to extend his credit, but to gradually contract his loans."⁷ Meiggs succeeded in persuading another firm to take over his debt in this instance.

All his creditors were not so fortunate. He had incurred a very heavy debt through his enthusiastic purchase of North Beach property. Assessments and taxes were accumulating and the sales of his lots in this district had not brought in the returns he had anticipated. The fact that he was in precarious financial straits was not then known to his most intimate friends. The commercial and financial editors of the day did not seem to regard it as at all unusual that he should find it necessary to borrow large sums of money at exorbitant rates of interest. Meiggs had always been known as a borrower, and it seemed but natural that he should present city warrants as security. No one suspected that he had forged them. These city warrants, bound in book form, had been signed in blank by the Mayor and Comptroller for the sake

of convenience. Meiggs knew where these books were kept. He could not resist the temptation.⁸ Some accounts state that he employed a clerk to do the actual work of the forgeries, for he was not a skillful penman.

The holders of the collateral presented by him as security for loans did not trouble themselves to verify their genuineness at the office of the Comptroller. Some time elapsed before the disclosure of his forgeries. Cautious bankers of our present day would probably deem it quite unusual that the validity of these securities was not questioned until the actual crash came.

Henry Meiggs maneuvered to have his brother, John G. Meiggs, elected City Comptroller in the hope that this close relative might keep from the public the knowledge of the fraudulent character of the warrants or eventually succeed in having them validated. Attempts to connect the brother with Henry Meiggs's fraudulent practices were unsuccessful, and many believed that John Meiggs had no knowledge of the corrupt transactions.⁹

About a month or two before the actual crash came, some money-lenders thought that Meiggs seemed to be financially embarrassed.¹⁰ As this talk reached Meiggs, he became alarmed. He chartered the bark *American*, a vessel of several hundred tons, provisioned her with choice foods, wines and necessities, and told his friends he was going for a cruise on the Bay with his family and brother. Instead, he made a hasty passage through the Golden Gate and was out on the Pacific before it was known that he had fled the City.¹¹

When the public realized that Meiggs had absconded, those who held warrants pledged by him as security rushed to the City Hall. Bankers, merchants, city officials, mechanics, and even a few women, including his laundress, were among them. The City Treasurer, himself, was duped to the extent of \$20,000.

Two indictments only were found against Meiggs. The first charged him with having forged a note for \$15,000 in the name of William Neely Thompson and Company. The second charged that Meiggs passed a certain forged warrant for \$10,000.¹² Many of his friends felt that by fleeing from California Meiggs had taken the only method by which he could pay his debts. Henry Meiggs, the grandson, has given to the writer this information:

"My father-in-law, who was President of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce about 1885, told me that in the crisis that followed the gold rush Henry Meiggs found himself in a very difficult position financially. Had he remained in California he could not have satisfied his creditors."

The late Luke Fay, an authority on San Francisco personalities, gave the following information:

"Everybody who ever knew Harry Meiggs spoke well of him and wished that he was back. He never assumed a new name. He must have thought he would come back in the financial world. He never welched out of an honest debt and he never pleaded the statute of limitations, or went through bankruptcy."

Eventually Meiggs arrived in Chile. Attempts were made to arrest him and turn him over to an officer from California, but he employed able counsel. When the case was laid before the Chilean Government, it was decided that Meiggs should not be returned. Some accounts state that he landed in Chile with a vast sum of money. He himself later stated that he landed there with only \$8,200, and that before he got on the road to prosperity again, he had become so poor that he was compelled to pawn his watch.

At first Meiggs was regarded with suspicion in Chile, but his extraordinary energy and business talents rendered him serviceable to the Chilean Government. His winning personality doubtless aided him in establishing credit in this new land of opportunity. All obligations which he incurred in establishing himself and his family in the new land he attempted to meet with promptness. He secured several railway contracts for short local roads and was able to repay when due the large advances of money required for the work. Within five months from his arrival in Chile he was one of the leading business men of Valparaiso and possessed a good bank account.¹³

Meiggs continued to take advantage of every opportunity. A contemporary Chilean account sums up the situation in this manner:

Chile was fortunate in having this man employ his genius in her land. Since he landed in Talcahuano in 1855 he has studied and has learned of the resources, character and necessities of the country of his adoption. He saw the things which had to be done to advance this Spanish Republic, one of them being the development of the means of communication which would bring the cities closer together.¹⁴

Step by step Meiggs accumulated a fortune through the construction of railway lines in the Chilean republic. He suffered under the report that came from California concerning his forgeries. John Bigler, formerly Governor of California, was appointed Minister to Chile and went there with his family about the year 1856. Upon his arrival, Meiggs made every effort to convince him that, as far as possible, he was trying to redeem his losses and make restitution. The period of his friendship with Bigler was one of the happiest in his life. Bigler was never wealthy, and in the latter years of his life he suffered actual poverty, as well as ill-health. When Meiggs heard of his plight, he sent him a present of \$10,000.¹⁵

About this time Meiggs made the acquaintance of Señor Antonio Varas, Chilean Minister of the Interior. He readily recognized Meiggs's genius as an organizer and builder and forthwith awarded to him the contract for building the Rancagua-Santiago railroad.¹⁶ This work Meiggs completed without any great difficulty, much to the surprise of those interested in the project. A contract was then given him for the construction of the Valparaiso-Santiago railroad. Many of his friends warned him that he would encounter much greater trouble in completing this road, but those most closely connected with the project did not dream that he could complete the entire work within the three-year limit set by contract. In this agreement he was to be subjected to

a fine of \$10,000 monthly for every month he exceeded the time limit, or an equal sum as a bonus if it was completed before the stipulated date. From the moment Meiggs undertook this stupendous task, it was quite clear that he had a plan for mastering its difficulties.

This railroad line is 116 miles long, although it is only 62½ miles by air line. Meiggs employed between eight and ten thousand men at unprecedented wages, and established the first modern contractor's camp in Chile, with comfortable barracks, hospitals and commissaries. He installed excellent sanitary arrangements, employed his own doctors, and organized his enormous force like an independent state. He treated his men fairly. Dividing the proposed road into sections, each under a boss, he offered a bonus of one dollar for each yard of rails laid within a stated time. Thus the entire road was completed within two years and the inauguration of this new railroad service was made a festive occasion. Among the many toasts offered was one by Señor Varas wherein he made it clear that great difficulties had been overcome by Meiggs in completing his work ahead of schedule.¹⁷

As for Meiggs, he readily admitted that his success was due to the fact that he had treated his workers humanely. He met the prediction that "you cannot govern the workmen here because they are peevish and insubordinate" by treating his employees like men and not like dogs. He was touched by the lavish words of praise in his behalf, and in response thereto he made the following remarks:

Here in Chile a rule very different from that of the United States prevails. Here the poor peons or unskilled laborers look with distrust upon their more skilled and better-paid collaborators who often are not willingly admitted to participation in labor meetings. In the United States, on the contrary, skilled and unskilled workmen alike are worthy of general approval and their friendship is sought by all, for there, intelligence and useful activity, not clothes, take one to higher positions and universal esteem. I wish the same would happen in Chile.

Every time I undertake railroad work, I prefer to work with five hundred Chilean workers than with one thousand Irishmen. These regularly rebel and often fight their superiors when they see the least reason for complaint of the food, or when the contract is not followed to the letter.

I review with joy the completed task entrusted to my efforts, but the triumph is not mine alone. I have had ardent co-operators . . . whose generous efforts for the termination of this deed are publicly known.¹⁸

Before the actual completion of the Valparaiso-Santiago Railway, Henry Meiggs had several other big contracts under way, and in addition he had become interested in developing Chile's nitrate deposits. A contemporary stated that his accomplishments in the country of his adoption deserved the staunchest admiration. Because of his work the national credit abroad had improved, whereas previously creditors feared to loan to the national treasury money at interest rates of forty and fifty per cent. He stated further: "Meiggs belongs to the class of self-made men of which Lincoln, Grant, Webster, and

Longfellow are examples. Without other assets than their personal talents, these men have won fame as men of constructive minds."¹⁹

No one in Chile seemed to object to the fortune Meiggs made there in three years. He had made a correct assumption when he decided that Chile, with its new interest in the creation of public improvements and the means of communication, would afford the means necessary to recoup his lost fortune in California. For twelve years he enjoyed the hospitality of Chile. In the City of Santiago he maintained his private residence. It was built on one of the largest and most beautiful avenues in the city at a cost of \$600,000, and if it was not "Meiggs' Folly" it was at least "Meiggs' Pride."

About this time Meiggs became interested in the progress of Peru. His name and fame had spread beyond Chile, and the Peruvian Republic to the north became interested in his services. The growth and progress of Peru had depended entirely upon the exploitation of the guano deposits, valuable as fertilizer, on the Chincha Islands in the Bay of Pisco. Through the monopoly of this business the Government had, for a time, an annual revenue of nearly \$15,000,000. But at that rate of exploitation, President Balta, of Peru, saw that the supply would soon be exhausted.²⁰ It was the President's desire to tap the headwaters of the Amazon River by means of two railroads, each crossing the dizzy heights of the Andes.²¹

Special agents of Peru urgently requested Meiggs to visit that country and contract for the construction of its railroads. Following a revolt in Peru in 1867, a second invitation came. Finally that country changed its invitations to peremptory demands for his services. He arrived in Lima, Peru, on March 31, 1869. During that same year Peru had obtained an enormous loan from Dreyfus and Company, of Paris, in return for a monopoly on exports of guano. It was this loan which enabled the Government of Peru to sign a contract with Meiggs in December, 1869, for the construction of a railroad across the Andes. As early as May, 1868, however, it had made a contract with Meiggs to subsidize the construction of a railroad from Arequipa to the Pacific Ocean, which road was opened in December, 1870.²²

It was realized in Peru that the Arequipa road would be only the beginning of a great scheme for internal improvements, to accomplish which all the resources and credit of the country would be taxed to their limit. The work had to be undertaken by one whose executive ability would guarantee success, and whose reputation would infuse confidence and strengthen credit for the enterprise. President Manuel Pardo consequently leaned more and more upon Henry Meiggs.²³ The latter, on the other hand, recognized the fact that the immense revenue from the guano deposits might better be used to promote accord than revolution, and that such a resource should be employed for the development of Peru.

"Don Enrique," by which name he soon became known and loved, never let political power go to his head. He was an astute politician. He managed

AT A RE-UNION OF OLD
Californians
 HELD AT THE
 TURLEVANT HOUSE, NEW-YORK

Thursday evening February 14, 1873

The following resolution, offered by Mr. John Nichols
 was adopted;

Resolved,

That the old Californians assembled here to-night have heard with inexpressible
 pleasure and pride of the splendid achievements of their old fellow-citizen.

HENRY MEIGGS

in the introduction of the ^{AND} ^{AS} ^{AN} great modern civilizer, the railroad and the locomotive
 IN CHILE AND PERU.

AND HAVE MARKED THE PROGRESS
 which has resulted to the people of those countries, by reason of the energy
 and enterprise of this great man.

Recognizing the honor which he has conferred upon himself as an old Californian

American citizen.

we extend to him our congratulations and rejoice with pride in the firm
 and prosperity which he has so fairly earned.

GENT. THOS. D. JOHNS, moved that the Secretary be instructed to have the
 resolution engrossed, framed and forwarded to Mr. Henry Meiggs.

W. B. Truwell

N. G. S. Jones

Secretary

Chairman

RESOLUTION OF FORMER CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS
 CONGRATULATING HENRY MEIGGS ON HIS
 ACHIEVEMENTS IN CHILE AND PERU

men, and these men, in turn, managed the country.²⁴ He went further than this. He began his "shirtsleeve diplomacy," giving all potential revolutionists something to do. Previously, when a man came into power he and his friends were sole beneficiaries of the state funds. Meiggs, with his larger vision, saw there was plenty of money for all, so he gave everyone something to do, and some money for doing it, with the result that he destroyed revolution at its source. When he received the contract to build the railroad from Mollendo to Arequipa, he built camps with modern sanitation, and established workshops and stores. The Government at once placed 2,000,000 *soles*²⁵ in his hands, without requiring bonds or securities of any kind. The road, when completed, was opened to the public in January, 1871, six months before the time stipulated by the contract.²⁶ Meiggs was now the railroad king of Peru. The ceremonies on the occasion of the laying of the last tie in this road were of the most costly character. The expenses, which were borne by the contractor, Meiggs, have been estimated at \$200,000.

Meanwhile greater enterprises had been commenced. For 60,000,000 *soles* in Peruvian bonds, Mr. Meiggs contracted to continue the Arequipa road, now 114 miles long, to the town of Puno on Lake Titicaca. This line, about 230 miles in length, was completed in 1873. It crossed the Andes at an altitude of 14,665 feet above sea level, passing over a barren, rocky waste of mountains. When completed it was the grand thoroughfare to Bolivia and the southern interior of Peru. Every item of equipment, machinery and supplies had to be transported by mule and llama trains, and water had to be piped for scores of miles to the railway. Much of the work was done at high levels above the sea, ranging from 14,000 to 16,000 feet.²⁷

Meiggs's greatest achievement in railway building was the construction of the Central Railway of Peru, the highest standard-gauge railway in the world at the time of its construction. It crossed the Andes at about 17,000 feet above sea level. Although he did not live to see the road completed, his part in its building is perpetuated in the snow-capped peak marked in the geographies, "Mount Meiggs."²⁸ This road was constructed for the purpose of connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans across the Andes. It is regarded as one of the most daring achievements of modern engineering, ascending to almost inaccessible heights, running along precipices, over bridges, and through mountain peaks by means of thirty-two tunnels which often so closely follow one another as to seem continuous. In addition, a 15,300-foot rise had to be encountered within sixty miles of the Pacific Coast. To finance this enterprise, Meiggs largely sacrificed his own private means when his progress was impeded by the disturbed condition of Peruvian finances.²⁹

Innumerable incidents and stories are told of the ingenuity of Meiggs. On one occasion he had difficulty in inducing landowners to part with their property required for the railway from Callao to Lima. Meiggs, however, knew the Latin temperament. When he found that money did not tempt them,

he agreed to erect a monument commemorating their public spirit if they would turn over the land.⁸⁰ He was not so successful, however, in dealing with certain other parties, as is shown by an incident which occurred at the time the Oroya road was begun. An attempt was made to enter into a reasonable contract with the Callao-Lima Railroad Company for the transportation of material over their line, but not a point was yielded by the owners of this monopoly. Then exorbitant demands only served to produce a new display of ingenuity on the part of Meiggs. Quietly he purchased an extensive tract of vacant land extending from the borders of Lima to the harbor of Callao, a distance of seven miles, and constructed a railroad on his own hacienda with which no monopoly could interfere.⁸¹

It was evident that the successful completion of a railroad joining the Pacific with the Atlantic would be of inestimable value to both Peru and Brazil. In addition, Meiggs desired to reach the Cerro de Pasco mining region, famous for its huge deposits of silver and copper ore, which in a crude and primitive way had been exploited since the days of the Spanish Conquest. By tapping these mines and installing up-to-date machinery, he hoped to develop a profitable "feeder" for his new railway line.⁸²

Some authorities place the loss of lives in the building of the Oroya Railway as high as fifteen thousand. This loss was due to no negligence on the part of Meiggs. He was particularly solicitous in providing for the welfare of the Chilean, Chinese, Indian, and other laborers employed by him. The loss of life may be attributed to two causes: the sudden transition from a hot climate on the coast of Peru to the frigid climate of the Peruvian Andes and a peculiar and horrible blood-poisoning disease which broke out when work began on the Verrugas viaduct. This disease is thought by some physicians to be caused by a germ which can be absorbed into the system with food or water and then communicated through the saliva. It may have had its origin in the decomposed soil of the Verrugas Valley. The disease attacked every unacclimated person, usually with fatal results. In other parts of the lofty Andean heights through which the route of the Oroya railroad lay, the mountain "sirroche" sickness frequently proved fatal.⁸³

The span of Henry Meiggs's life was too short for the completion of this road in its entirety. At the time of his death the principal tunneling and much of the grading and track for the remainder of the line had been completed. Little additional labor was required to put the rest of the railway into running order, for Meiggs had been watchful of all details throughout the early part of the work. According to a contemporary account, "It was characteristic of Mr. Meiggs to tolerate no second-class work; even where he was doing the work by contract, everything had to be built in the best and most substantial manner."⁸⁴

Meiggs did not confine his interests only to railroad construction. He wanted to replace the reed boats of the Indians on Lake Titicaca with steam-

ship service. A vessel was built in Scotland, taken apart at Mollendo, and transported over the Andes to the lake. There the steamer was reassembled and it today navigates the lake "on the roof of the world." Another public work was the improvement of the environs of Lima by replacing the filth and rubbish of many generations with a park over seven miles in length.³⁵

Within eight years of his arrival in Peru, Henry Meiggs had contracts aggregating more than \$125,000,000. While he could overcome natural obstacles, he could not cope with his enemies. The railways did not pay a profit, the guano deposits were rapidly depleted, the "outs" in politics became troublesome, and Meiggs's power over the Government began to wane.³⁶ His embarrassments and his failure to complete the roads which he projected were due to the inability of the Government to make good its obligations. Dr. George H. Ghiselin, who had known Henry Meiggs intimately in Peru, made the following statement at the time of Meiggs's death:

If Peru had been able to keep the pledges given, Meiggs would have completed the work assigned to him. The contract called for the payment of \$100,000,000 of which sum only \$70,000,000 was raised. The latest, and what he regarded as the grandest scheme of his life, was directed to the development of the Cerro de Pasco mines, in the Cordilleras chain, and his hope was that this work should go forward without interruption, as it has so much bearing on the national progress of Peru.³⁷

It cannot be denied that Henry Meiggs was very much of a rogue, if one measures him by the ordinary scale of morality. He fled from the scene of his misdemeanors unceremoniously. However, no man, native or foreign, ever held such general and long-continued popularity in South America as did Harry Meiggs. His liberality made him an idol among the poorer classes, his lavish hospitality an honored example among his friends, and his shrewd business tact, prompt action and gigantic schemes, a power with the Government.³⁸ His hand was always extended to help the unfortunate of any race, but toward his own countrymen his generosity knew no bounds. Stories that seem almost fabulous are told of the way in which he welcomed impoverished Americans and helped them on their way.

He presented to the Government of Peru the site necessary for the construction of a custom-house, and to Callao he gave much land to widen her cemetery. When he heard of the misfortune which had overtaken the City of Chicago by reason of the fire of 1871, he gave more than any individual banker or millionaire in all the world to alleviate the suffering there. At another time news reached him that a patriot had defended the name of America in Europe, and he donated more than \$15,000 as a reward for this action. He was a benefactor to struggling students, ten of whom he rewarded annually with funds with which to complete their education and training.³⁹

Meiggs was a builder. He made millions, but it was the adventure and the power which lured him—*la empresa*, the undertaking, as he expressed it. As a railroad builder he was in James J. Hill's class; but as a financier he was in

a class by himself, for on the strength of the guano revenue the Government of Peru borrowed thirty million pounds abroad. At that time American banking houses were afraid to risk loans in South America.⁴⁰

The interests of Meiggs were greatly varied. Reports vaguely describe the nature of a contract between the Government of Bolivia and Meiggs whereby he held the monopoly for building railroads there and working rich mines in a large section around Mejillones, with extensive rights for the removal of guano. Immensely rich silver mines were discovered in this region, and immediately prominent bankers of Chile notified Mr. Meiggs that they were ready to furnish capital for building a railroad at once between the two points, Mejillones and La Paz, the capital of Bolivia, and urged his immediate action in undertaking the work.⁴¹

In Bolivia he also established a bank at La Paz, loaned the Government a large sum of money, and received its aid in the circulation of his paper throughout the country. His development of the Cerro de Pasco silver mines in Peru near the Bolivian border was cut short by his untimely death.

In running his railways through the Andes, Meiggs used American engineers, locomotives, cars and bridges. Notwithstanding the fact that he had expatriated himself under the most unfavorable circumstances, he remained an American, and although he obtained his money in Europe for his many great projects, he bought most of his materials for his railways in the United States. This was due, also, to the fact that American bridges were preferred on account of their better and more simple construction, pin connections replacing to advantage the riveted structures of European engineers.⁴²

His financial reverses, experienced through the inability of the Government of Peru to meet its obligations, probably hastened his death, which occurred on September 30, 1877. In accordance with his last request, he was buried at his estate, "Villegas," in a vault above ground which he had previously prepared. A very large white granite rock brought down from Oroya was placed over the grave, an everlasting monument to his memory, since it cannot be moved without the consent of the Meiggs family which owns the plot of land on which it stands.⁴³

At the time of his death one of the most prominent members of the Peruvian bar, Dr. Lucialo Cisneros, suggested that the Government of Peru address the American representatives then present in Lima to the effect that Peru regarded the loss of Henry Meiggs as a misfortune, and he suggested that the Government request them to attend the funeral services as mourners.⁴⁴ It was known at the time of Meiggs's death that the debt still owing to his estate by the Government of Peru was very great. After many legacies to his relatives and servants, he bequeathed all of his property to his children, enjoining them and his executors to carry on the work he had initiated, the completion of which had been his fondest hope.⁴⁵ With regard to his obligations in California, the grandson of the railway builder states:

My parents gave me to understand that my grandfather had paid all his obligations in full, including the accrued interest. Of course, I cannot vouch for the accuracy of this statement, but it does not seem probable he would have been congratulated by the Society of Old Californians at their re-union at Sturtevant House, New York, February 11, 1875 had he redeemed his notes at a lower price than their full value.⁴⁰

As early as the winter of 1873-74 Meiggs managed to procure passage of a bill through both houses of the California legislature ordering any indictments already found against him to be dismissed, and making it unlawful for any grand jury in the future to indict him for any offense committed in California prior to 1855.⁴¹ Apparently he had some thoughts of returning to San Francisco. Cogent reasons were given against such a bill in the senate. It was plain that such a statute would be an unwarranted interference with the judicial department, and would be clearly unconstitutional, but the legislature seemed determined to pass it, and did so.⁴² Governor Newton Booth rebuked the California legislature for passing unanimously such an act and proceeded to veto it. He pointed out that such an act of immunity, if adopted, would be regarded as a scandalous exhibition of deference to wealth, as well as an unconstitutional usurpation of power.⁴³

The community at large, however, felt that "Honest Harry" had meant to do no wrong, and that he was the victim of a perfectly laudable ambition to boom part of the town in whose future he had great faith.⁴⁴ Dr. George H. Chuselin, an intimate acquaintance of Meiggs in Lima, says: "He expressed to me frequently, and especially the last time I dined at his house in July last (1877), his desire to return and see his friends in California, saying that if his life was spared for two years more he would go and see them. He never referred to the subject without dwelling deeply and affectionately on the pleasure he would derive from greeting his San Francisco friends."⁴⁵

At the time his business was flourishing, Meiggs employed a force of more than twenty thousand workers—on his roads, in his railway stations, and at his offices in various cities of the Pacific coast of South America. His main interest, aside from constructive work, was in music. Since a mere lad he had studied under good teachers. He spent his hours of rest in his home listening to the piano played by members of his family, and, no doubt, he was inspired to do his greatest work in these moments of relaxation.⁴⁶

Many honors and testimonials were heaped upon Meiggs. A silver epergne, weighing nearly eight hundred ounces and costing about \$5,000, made by Tiffany's, of New York, was presented to Meiggs from a number of gentlemen present on the occasion of the opening of the Callao, Lima and Oroya Railway in 1871.⁴⁷ This epergne is now on display in the Pan American Union Building in Washington, D. C., through the courtesy of Minor C. Keith. Meiggs of New York City. The Italian Government, which had charge of the police department training in Peru during Meiggs's residence there, saw fit to decorate him in the year 1875, distinguishing him with the rank of officer of the Order of the Crown of Italy.

The faults of Henry Meiggs have been overlooked by few, while his accomplishments have rarely been mentioned. We find in this man one who expatriated himself under questionable circumstances, a man who took up his abode in a foreign land and served his adopted homeland with great distinction. It is unfortunate that he found it necessary to leave his own country through force of circumstances, thereby robbing it of the services of an extremely human and capable man.

While some were most willing to condemn him as a forger and criminal when he fled from California, they were more than willing to accept him again in their midst, as was indicated by the unanimous action of the California Legislature of 1873-74. That Henry Meiggs had reinstated himself in the good graces of his former fellow-citizens is evidenced by the resolution adopted by former California residents in their reunion held on that day in February, 1875, in New York City in which they stated their inexpressible pleasure and pride in hearing of his splendid achievements in Chile and Peru, congratulating him on the fame and prosperity he had so fairly earned.

He was a man among men, a financial genius, attempting to accomplish tasks in the face of almost certain defeat, with determination and consistency, and with a precision of judgment which invariably brought his tasks through to a successful conclusion. Anyone whose privilege it was to know him was his friend. He made mistakes; but he was human. He did the one thing which many humans fail to do—he recognized his mistakes and set to work to right the wrongs which had resulted.

NOTES

1. A. Hyatt Verrill, "Henry Meiggs, A Forgotten Colossus," *Plain Talk*, VI, 620-21 (May, 1930).
2. San Francisco *Morning Call*, October 17, 1877.
3. Verrill, *op. cit.*, VI, 620 (May, 1930).
4. "Henry Meiggs Completes a Difficult Task," MS, a photostat copy of which is on file in the Edward L. Doheny, Jr., Memorial Library, University of Southern California. The manuscript, which is anonymous but was probably written by a newspaper reporter, gives a summary of the life of Henry Meiggs and his work done while in Chile, 1855-1863.
5. T. H. Hittell, *History of California*, III, 434.
6. Andrew Young, letter, dated October 20, 1930, to the author. Mr. Young was living in San Francisco in the late fifties.
7. Gen. W. T. Sherman, *Personal Memoirs*, N. Y., 1875, I, 105. B. R. Nisbet was a partner in the banking firm of Lucas, Turner & Co.
8. John P. Young, *Journalism in California*, S. F., 1915, p. 31.
9. Bailey Millard, *The San Francisco Bay Region*, Chicago: American Historical Society, Inc., 1924, I, 142.
10. *Morning Call*, October 17, 1877.
11. Millard, *op. cit.*, I, 146.
12. San Francisco *Morning Call*, October 12, 1877.
13. A. Hyatt Verrill, "Henry Meiggs, A Forgotten Colossus," *Plain Talk*, May, 1930, p. 623.
14. "Henry Meiggs Completes a Difficult Task," MS.
15. San Francisco *Morning Call*, October 14, 1877.
16. Valparaiso (Chile) *La Union*, September 23, 1917, p. 1.

17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*
19. "Henry Meiggs Completes a Difficult Task," MS.
20. Mary Wilhelmine Williams, *The People and Politics of Latin America*, Boston: Ginn & Co., 1930, p. 566. The large surplus from the exploitation of this guano, instead of being spent in the extension of schools and roads, and on other internal improvements, was used by unscrupulous officials to reward political friends, or to buy off political enemies.
21. Charles A. Wetmore, "Harry Meiggs in Peru," *Overland Monthly*, VII, 175 (August, 1871).
22. William Spence Robertson, *History of the Latin-American Nations*, New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1922, p. 344.
23. Wetmore, *op. cit.*, VII, 177 (August, 1871).
24. Charles R. Flint, "Some 'Basic Truths' I Have Learned in Two Great Markets," *System*, Vol. 40, p. 479 (October, 1921).
25. The *sole* is a late Peruvian coin of commercial value a little less than the American dollar, and twenty-five per cent more valuable than the old silver *peso*.
26. Wetmore, *op. cit.*, VII, 179 (August, 1871).
27. *Ibid.*
28. Verrill, *op. cit.*, VI, 624 (May, 1930). Its summit is only 136 feet lower than the summit of Mt. Blanc.
29. *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, New York, 1892-1933, XIII, 138.
30. Verrill, *op. cit.*, VI, 624 (May, 1930).
31. Wetmore, *op. cit.*, VII, 180 (August, 1871).
32. International Bureau of the American Republics, *Bulletin*, Vol. 28, No. 1, p. 78 (January, 1909).
33. International Bureau of the American Republics, *op. cit.*
34. *The Engineering and Mining Journal*, December 21, 1878, p. 435.
35. Verrill, *op. cit.*, VI, 624 (May, 1930).
36. *Ibid.*, p. 625.
37. San Francisco *Morning Call*, October 13, 1877.
38. "Henry Meiggs Completes a Difficult Task," MS.
39. *La Union* (newspaper), Valparaiso, Chile, September 23, 1917.
40. Flint, *op. cit.*, Vol. 40, p. 479 (October, 1921).
41. Wetmore, *op. cit.*, VII, 177 (August, 1871).
42. *The Engineering and Mining Journal*, December 21, 1878, p. 435.
43. Letter, Henry Meiggs, of Palo Alto, California, to the author, dated December 9, 1930.
44. *Panama Star and Herald*, October 22, 1877; quoted in the San Francisco *Morning Call*, November 4, 1877.
45. The will of Henry Meiggs is written in Spanish and is the usual stereotyped legal form. This information comes to the author from Henry Meiggs, of Palo Alto, California, in a letter dated March 18, 1931.
46. *Ibid.*
47. *California State Journal*, 1873-74, pp. 462-65, 837-38; *Statutes of California*, 1873-74, pp. 192, 749.
48. Hittell, *op. cit.*, IV, 531.
49. J. P. Young, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
50. San Francisco *Morning Call*, October 12, 1877.
51. *Ibid.*
52. *The South Pacific Times*, Callao, Peru, October 13, 1877, p. 4.
53. San Francisco *Alta*, June 22, 1871.

A FRENCHMAN IN THE PANAMINTS

Translated from the French of Edmond Leuba

By ALLEN L. CHICKERING

IN THE JUNE, 1938, *Quarterly* there appeared an account of a trip to Searles Lake in 1874, written by Edmond Leuba.¹ The author had intended to visit the then active mining town of Panamint, but owing to weather conditions he deferred the trip until the fall of the same year. A translation of his account of this second trip follows:

Toward the end of this same year 1874, in December as I recollect, I undertook a second trip into the Mojave Desert, leaving Los Angeles alone this time for Panamint. The country which I had passed through eight months previously was already less deserted. The Mining Company of Cerro Gordo had at intervals established stations to take care of its great freight teams, but with no view of accommodating travelers.² Yet one could always find some wretched hovel around these stations, where, in case of necessity, one could seek accommodations. The road was more traveled. From dawn to sunset one would encounter men going to or returning from Panamint, because this was the period of the greatest excitement in this mining district.

Departing from Soledad,³ I arrived one evening, after a trip of fifty miles in the sand, at the new station called the "Fork of the Roads."⁴ My two horses, excellent animals of American stock, were exhausted. I could not think of pushing on to Desert Springs, where I might expect to find a good bed and shelter for my horses, so I stopped at the miserable cabin at the "Fork of the Roads."

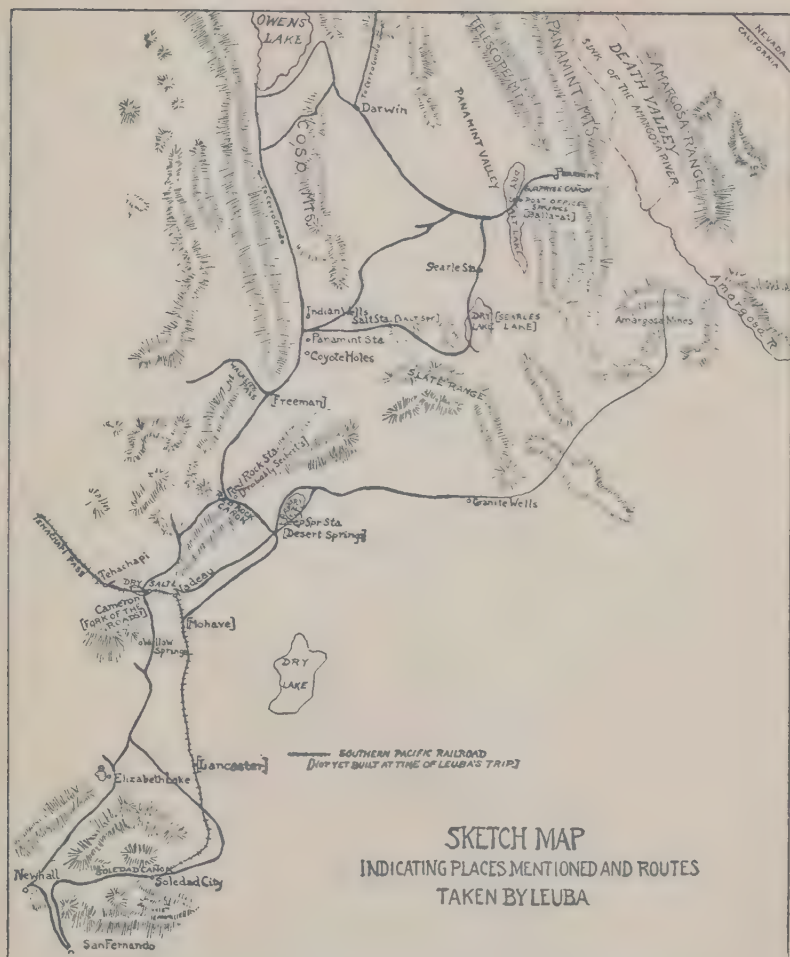
Before the door sat a young woman, her eyes filled with tears, holding a very little girl close to her.

"Can you take me in and furnish water and hay for my horses?" I inquired.

"Certainly, sir," replied the woman; and, after some hesitation, "but may I beg of you to pass the night here? It will oblige me greatly."

I undoubtedly showed some little surprise at her request, so she continued:

"Heavens above, sir! I am alone in the house with my little girl. My husband has been gone for two days in the Tehachapi where he went to buy hay and is not due back until tomorrow morning. Before he left we took in, out of charity, a man who was at the end of his rope and asked us for some work. As soon as I was left alone here he took possession of the barroom. He is very drunk and has made all sorts of threats. You haven't seen him yet. He is asleep in the corral and I am so afraid of him that if someone won't spend the night here, I have decided to go with my daughter to seek protection at the nearest station."



SKETCH MAP
INDICATING PLACES MENTIONED AND ROUTES
TAKEN BY LEUBA

"Be reassured, Madame, I shall be very glad to be of service to you. I didn't intend to go any further if I could find here a place to sleep and put up my horse."

I went into the corral to wake up the trouble maker.

"Come get up and help me unharness and take care of my horses," said I to him.

"God damn!" he replied, lying back on his bundle of straw, "leave me alone; I am not here to serve you."

"Come now, be a good fellow and get up."

"Go to hell!" he yelled.

"All right, I have been courteous to you and you are a boor. You get up quickly and help me without any more talk."

The scamp, armed with a pitchfork, started after me.

"Oh, I am ready for you," I said, pointing at him the muzzle of a great navy revolver, which I had purchased in Los Angeles. "Don't take a step or I will shoot you like a dog."

He laid down the pitchfork and started with some grumbling to help me.

That evening a bed was fixed for me in the barroom. The boor demanded that he be permitted to sleep in the house.

"I beg you not to let him," said the woman. "He is a real bandit."

During the evening I went out to the corral and found him. I lent him my blankets for the night and told him to settle his whiskey in the fresh air. He seemed to have thought the matter over and to have realized that he would gain nothing by being such a nuisance, because in the morning I found him out looking after my horses.

"You had the best of it last night," he said, "because you were armed, but I will meet you again some day and get my revenge. Take care of yourself then."

"I get you, but I am generally on my guard in this country. If I may give you some advice, it is to roll up your bundle and get out of here before the boss returns. It is extremely likely that he won't be as easy as I have been and will smash your ribs for you."

He got his breakfast and left in the direction of Desert Springs. During the morning I continued my journey and saw my man making his way on the trail through Desert Lake, while I took the one to the left through Red Rock Canyon.⁵ Before long I arrived at the spring where Charles Seibert⁶ had received me so kindly some months previous. But he was no longer there. His little hut had disappeared with him. On a neighboring rock I read, written in large letters of charcoal, "Left for Panamint. C. S."

Two days later I reached the borax lake [Searles Lake] of the Slate Range.⁷ Sam Harper, of Los Angeles and Soledad, who had rented me the horses and wagon which I was using for the trip, had built on the border of the lake, a short distance from the Searles plant,⁸ a sort of house made of great stones

collected here and there. The air penetrated between these blocks and through the canvas roof. A single room without any flooring occupied the space bounded by the four walls. It was at the same time the barroom, dining room and sleeping room without beds. The kitchen was behind the house in a tent. As for a stable for the horses, there was none, nor was there even a corral. They were staked out with their blankets on, as the nights are always cold in this region. I stopped at this station, not wishing to disturb my friends the Searles, who were very much occupied at this particular time in building their factory to refine borax and a dwelling house more comfortable than the miserable cabin which they had previously lived in.

In these regions it is very advisable not to stay anywhere longer than absolutely necessary. All prices are exorbitant. The country produces nothing, not even drinking water, which costs \$.25 a bucket, while hay and grain cost \$.10 to \$.12 a pound, which makes the feed for two horses run to \$15.00 to \$20.00 a day, or 75 to 100 francs.

I had forty-five miles to go to reach Panamint. At least that was what everyone told me, but these fifteen leagues seemed to me to measure twenty to twenty-five across the same sandy soil and the mountains of the Slate Range which must be crossed to reach the Panamint chain. This chain forms the boundary between California and the State of Nevada. [The author's error.] The east slope of Slate Range is very abrupt, and the road, not able to wind around, descends almost perpendicularly into the valley, to such an extent that, although I tied the rear wheels, I had to get out and keep at the heads of my horses, holding them back in their many slides which could very well tumble us over a precipice of five hundred to six hundred feet. The bottom of the valley is also the bed of an ancient lake, the surface of which is covered with salts of soda and of borax.

Toward two o'clock in the afternoon I arrived at the station known as "Post Office Spring," situated at the foot of the Panamint Mountains.

"You have about eleven miles to make to reach the mines," said the proprietor of the station, "and I urge you, if you wish to continue your trip today, not to stop long here, for the journey is not advisable at night."

He pointed out to me, three miles away, the entrance to the cañon which leads to Panamint, an entrance easily visible because the water rushing down the cañon in winter had made the rocks almost bare.⁹ The day waned as I wound around the cañon. A little brook ran at the foot of the rocks which raised themselves on the two sides of the road in high walls of some hundreds of feet and impossible to climb at almost all places. This cañon extends almost to the summit, about nine thousand feet above sea level, and for six or seven miles it is not over twenty feet wide.

The big company of the mines and waters of Panamint, under the control of United States Senator J. P. Jones, has built a road occupying the bottom of this slit in the mountain, a good enough road but often very steep.¹⁰

Night soon overtook me in this picturesque cañon. The gloom became so profound that I was obliged to depend on the intelligence of my horses to conduct me safely.

Every now and then cries of "Stop! stop!" rang through the cañon, which obliged me to do my best to keep out of the way of the horses and wagons coming down from Panamint, which, because of the darkness, I could discern with difficulty. Soon I saw a light. "I have arrived," thought I with joy, because I was worn out walking at the side of the wagon and being obliged to sit down every minute or two on some hard rock alongside of the road to catch my breath. There was a man, lantern in hand, barring my passage.

"You have to pay the toll," he said.

"How much?"

"For your two horses and your wagon it is \$3.00."

I found the toll a little steep. The road, according to what I had heard said, did not cost over \$25,000 to build and, at the rate of royalty, the capital engaged in this enterprise ought to be paid back promptly if the district lasts any time.

"Will I soon be at Panamint, and can you tell me where I can put my horses and wagon?" I asked the toll collector.

"You still have three miles to go," he replied. "As for a stable, I don't think there is any. There is none up there except the stage stable. But stop at the first wooden house. There is a shed where you can put your horses and feed them."

The ravine opened out a little, and soon all around me many fires lit up the cañon, while mining blasts, exploding every instant, stirred my tired horses. It was almost ten o'clock when I reached the first camps of Panamint, and the hut of which I had been told. I found a place to put my horses in the shelter of a tent. As for lodging for myself, that was another matter! "Higher up there is a French restaurant," said the stable man. "There you will find a place to eat and perhaps to sleep, but I wouldn't be too sure."

Taking my blankets and my traveling case, I looked for the happy bed which couldn't be found. I entered the restaurant. There was nothing French about it save the name on the sign. As for the proprietor, he was a Dalmatian named Perasich, who was shot the following winter in one of those brawls which are so frequent in new mining camps.¹¹ I told him of my desire to get something to eat and to find a roof for the night.

"I can offer you ham and eggs, potatoes and *paté de foie gras*," said my Dalmatian. "That is all I have left tonight. As for a bed, well, as you see, the whole house consists of this room and the kitchen in the rear. I expect some furniture before long and then I will build some bedrooms."

"I must find a place somewhere," I replied. "I can't sleep on the rocks in the street. Let me spread my blankets in a corner of your room. Here, at least, it is warm."

"You couldn't think of it," said Perasich. "We do not close this establish-

ment, and all night long there is a coming and going of drunkards, gamblers and women, who come to eat and generally make an uproar. You wouldn't be able to close your eyes and there is no protection from their coarse jests. Come with me. I will take you to my cellar, dug out of the mountain. There is where I sleep in the daytime. You can spread your blankets on some sacks of barley. The bed won't be soft, but you can sleep all night."

I arranged my bed as well as I could in this cave and was just about to sink into a restful sleep when I heard loud snoring in a dark corner of the cellar; then, coming from another direction, a voice crying with no great politeness, "Stop that snoring down there!" This warning had the desired effect, for a time at least.

All night long the door was opened and closed by new arrivals, who, stumbling in the darkness, would fall over some poorly placed sleeper. Then would follow the most frightful oaths and threats, happily without a sequel. In the morning I watched my fellow locators in the cellar file out, a dozen figures looking more or less like candidates for the gallows, and my first thought was to see if anything had been eased away from me. I then finally found a few hours of rest, alone in my underground bedchamber.

The sun shone brightly and the heat was intense in this narrow cañon where the camp of Panamint is situated. It is composed of about fifty huts made of logs, tents and little houses partly dug out of the rocks. Some days before, the snow had made its first appearance, but winter does not commence in earnest in these regions until the latter part of January, and all work is forcibly stopped then by the heaping up of the snow.

I went to the post office and the Wells, Fargo Express office. I had had sent to me at Panamint and at another station along the road, certain sums of money, not thinking it prudent, traveling alone, to take with me when I left all the money which this trip might require.

"There is nothing addressed to you," the Postmaster replied. I received the same response later at Indian Wells.

On my return to San Francisco, I made claim for this money at the place where the packets were duly registered.

"We will investigate," said the clerk in charge of the registered mail, "but if you haven't received it, it has probably been stolen along the road."

"In that case you will make it good," said I, "since the sender registered these letters and paid the extra charge."

"Pay? I should say not. The postal service is not responsible. But let us go and see the superintendent of detectives of the United States mail. He will look after your affair. Through him you will have the only chance to recover your money."

The chances looked very slim, but I decided to try. The superintendent, a very pleasant gentleman, made a note of my claim.

"I am going to the Panamint region in a few days," he said. "Many irregu-

larities have occurred on this mail route. I want to get at the heart of it. Come back and see me in three weeks."

"Your letters were stolen by the driver of the stage from Havilah to Indian Wells," announced the superintendent on his return. "I followed the thief as far as Ehrenberg on the Colorado River, where he had fled. I lost track of him there. I will find him, however, some day or other!"

"That is all right," said I, "but will I ever recover my money?"

"As for that, I am afraid that you will have to resign yourself to its loss."

And, as a matter of fact, I never heard of it again.

Descending the only street in the camp, distinguished for its ruts and rubbish, I directed myself toward the place where I had left my horses the previous evening, when I heard my name called by someone. It was Charles Seibert of Red Rock Canyon.

"If you will do me the pleasure of coming to see me, you will find that I am better fixed up than in the Tehachapi Mountains. My cabin down there served me merely as a temporary lodging."

I entered. Seibert ran a bar, a pursuit always yielding a good revenue in the mines. Nearly every building was a "Wine and Liquor Saloon."

"Why didn't you ask my address when you got in last night?" When I had told him of my little vexations: "You would have been no trouble at all to me. I would gladly have given you my bed, as we have two in the back room and I would have slept with my partner. Also this is understood, you are coming to stay with me. You are at Panamint to look over the mines?" continued he, "and if you have not a better guide I shall be charmed to conduct you around and show you the richest workings. I know nearly all the superintendents and I have some claims myself which I should like to have you take a look at."

I accepted gladly.

The greater part of the Panamint mines have been very little worked as yet. The deepest shafts are not more than seventy-five feet below the surface and the tunnels showed very little development. But it is in these first workings that they have found the richest ore and that which is easiest to work. Only two mines, so far as I know, have produced good ore to a depth of five hundred to six hundred feet. There is no mill for the reduction of this ore as yet at Panamint. The richest ore is sent to San Francisco at a transportation cost of \$80 to \$100 a ton, while the second class ore is heaped up at the mouth of the shafts from which it is extracted, awaiting the time when it can be treated here.

While the company of Senator John P. Jones was engaged in bringing water to the camp, from a point about two hundred meters above Panamint, where the cañon ends against the highest summit, it proceeded to build the first mill. Other reduction works have undoubtedly arisen since, in spite of the daily diminishing results from the mines, in which the width of the vein diminishes with depth or else becomes mainly composed of "base metals,"

that is to say, a silver base mixed with sulphurets, making the work of reduction much more difficult and onerous. This was the situation in the same camp the following year. Also the Panamint District has been largely deserted for the mining camp known as "Darwin," some forty miles from there, in California, where the workings have run into very rich ore also, but in which lead predominates and makes the reduction easier and less costly.¹²

I wanted to meet a man named Giovanni Patrizia, or his partner, both of whom have since been shot by a Mexican miner around Cerro Gordo over a few dollars involved in a poker game.

"You won't find them here," said Seibert. "They left about fifteen days ago, well equipped, to prospect in the Amargosa Mountains, northeast of here, and I don't think they will return soon. This would oblige you to make another trip, because I know that Patrizia has not done any work in the mines of Wild Rose Cañon. He is waiting for spring. You will have more chance to meet your two men in Los Angeles in the coming February than in the mountains, because, on their return from their prospecting trip, they will go down to the city to sell their new discoveries."

With my wagon loaded with two heavy sacks of mineral specimens from various mines which I had visited at Panamint and in which I was offered an interest at a nominal price, I considered taking the road to the plain. Two days later I arrived about four o'clock at the Salt Springs in the Mojave Desert in Inyo County.¹³ I stopped to give my horses a drink from two shallow wells which contained water scarcely potable, even for the horses, it was so impregnated with different salts. An old man came out of a small tent set up not far from the wells and offered to draw the water for me and then told me that I could find something to eat under his roof. Since a light breakfast at the borax lake, I had had nothing to eat, so I accepted his offer, in spite of the fact that he was so drunk that he could hardly keep his balance. I went into the tent with him and my first glance fell on an individual lying on a chest and probably also as full of whiskey as his companion. It was my boor from the station at the Fork of the Roads. He appeared as much surprised as I.

"Hello! That's you," he cried out, trying to regain his perpendicular position. "You know that we have an account to settle. I told you that we would meet again."

"Well, you may be sure that I am always ready for you and for gentry of your kind." At the same time I drew my great revolver from my side pocket. "But it doesn't seem to me that you are in any condition to respond. You had better wait for another opportunity."

"By God, the gentleman is right," interrupted the old man. "You can't raise a row around here, you good-for-nothing wretch. Come and light the fire so I can prepare something to eat."

"With you?" said I, smiling, because I noticed on a box of provisions the

name of Sam Harper, and I recalled at the same time having heard him speak of a sort of station which he had established at Salt Springs.

"With me, certainly," replied the old drunkard. "That is to say," he continued, "this tent and these provisions belong to Sam Harper. I found it entirely unoccupied some days ago and I moved in. But you may be sure that I will settle with Sam the first time he passes here."

"I hope so," I replied, although I didn't believe a word of it, "but if this taking possession is debatable, it at least ought not to degenerate into the abuse with which you and your companion have treated Sam's whiskey and without doubt his merchandise. It is very likely that he won't overlook this pleasantry. You will do well to leave, because he will probably arrive here tomorrow."

I didn't know anything about this. Strictly speaking, it could be true, because Harper left Soledad some hours after me, driving two enormous wagons, with twelve to fourteen mules and horses each, loaded with provisions and lumber for Panamint. But the quickness of his trip depended on the good conduct of half a dozen mustangs intermingled with the mules, which had been lassoed a half hour before being harnessed, and the poor animals were still so wild that they had made no attempt to pull together.

"Oh, don't worry, they will travel," Sam had told me.

Upon the announcement of Sam's expected arrival, my two drunkards exchanged a glance, easy to interpret as, "We will do well to move out of here pretty quickly, before Harper mauls us."

Having finished my lunch, with my revolver in my hand, because I saw my boor caress a bar of iron frequently, I said "Good-bye" to my filibusters of the desert and drove toward Indian Wells. I intended to stay there several days, as much to rest my horses as to await the arrival from San Francisco of money which would not enrich that thief. The stage driver was approaching the station when I heard my name called.

"Will you take a drink with me, Mr. Leuba?"

I didn't recognize the big, good-natured fellow, bronzed by the sun and covered with the dust of a long journey, who came up to me.

"I am Johnston, you know," he said. "Ah, I see you don't recognize me since I have shaved off my long beard, but you ought to recall the poker party which we had with those fellows from Los Angeles at the station at San Fernando."

I should say I did remember it! During an evening of ennui, after waiting impatiently for two days for the horses to continue my journey, I had gotten into a little poker party with the fellows mentioned and had been scandalously robbed, which I discovered too late.

"Indeed, sir, I didn't know who you were or it wouldn't have taken place, but I met on the road Mr. Nadaud [Nadeau], the superintendent of Cerro Gordo. He is my employer and I learned that you have had business with him

for a long time. I wish that I were able to return the money which we got out of you, but I can't, for it is spent. I would like, however, as far as I can to make amends for my wrong-doings and, if you will permit, I will give you a deed to 320 acres of borax land which I own in the Slate Range Lake. I don't know anything else that I can do and, according to what Mr. Nadaud tells me, this property is of some value to you." I accepted this reparation, swearing anew never to try playing poker again with people I do not know.

Two days later, I was just getting into my wagon to resume my lonely trip, when I saw Sam Harper and his freight teams arriving at the station of Indian Wells, or "Lagunita." I naturally told him what I had witnessed at Salt Springs, advising him to hurry if he wanted to find anything left in his hut, and I gave him a description of the two interlopers, warning him particularly to look out for the younger one, my boor of the Fork of the Roads. I scattered this information from prudence, as it was worth while to me to get rid of this enemy. So many accidents arise in traveling across these deserts, and Sam Harper, with his American roughness, understood better than I how to put an end to those who trespassed against him.

"Oh, it is not those fellows that I want the most, although if I meet them, they will pass through a bad quarter of an hour. But I am furious about the man whom I sent to Salt Springs to take care of that station. I can't understand how he could abandon the station as fully stocked with provisions as though I was looking after it myself. I have employed that man for a long time and had complete confidence in him. It will be useless for him to make any new dupes if he comes my way. I know where to find him, and believe me, I will settle my account with him."

And I did not doubt that he would, for Sam, the most jovial, the bravest of men, was also very quick when angry.

After a rapid drive of more than sixty-five miles, my horses having had nothing since daybreak except a few crackers and a little water, which I had ladled up with my hat in Red Rock Canyon, because I had been robbed of my buckets, I arrived late in the evening at the station of "Willow Springs," two days' trip from Los Angeles. I went into the bar while my dinner was being prepared. This little room with adobe walls possessed a large fireplace, around which were gathered a half dozen men, two of whom were known to me as prospectors from the city. There were only two beds in the establishment besides that of the proprietor, brother of a man named Kincaid with whom, and with my friend the Postmaster of Cucamonga, I owned a graphite mine in Los Angeles County.

One of the beds was reserved for me; the other, in the same room, was given to a fellow of rather good appearance. I slept soundly, until, in the middle of the night, the house bell began to ring furiously. My companion arose, lit the lamp and began to dress.

"For God's sake, what is the meaning of this? Is the house afire?"

"Not so far as I know. They are ringing for breakfast."

"How for breakfast? The night is perfectly dark. What time can it be?"

"Four o'clock," he replied, after looking at his watch. "I should say that it is early. It won't be daylight before seven o'clock and I don't intend to take the road before that. It seems to me that I could have slept a while longer." And he yawned and stretched his arms.

"And you are going to breakfast now?"

"Yes, since they have rung the bell. Anyway, I am dressed and I am not going back to bed."

"That would be the best thing you could do," said I. "As for me, I am going to sleep until seven or eight o'clock in the morning. I will breakfast then before leaving. It is a little too much to submit oneself to the will and the stupid orders of a station keeper or a cook."

My man appeared surprised at the remark. He had probably never stopped to think that hotel keepers are at the orders of travelers and not travelers at the caprices of bad cooks. He finished by laughing at the discovery and by telling me that I was right. But that did not prevent him from going when the bell called together the unhappy inhabitants of Willow Springs. About eight o'clock I went into the bar to get my "eye opener." The sun had hardly reached the desert as yet, and a layer of ice covered the little pool of water in front of the house. Around the fire, weary from an almost sleepless night on the rough benches of the barroom, I found four or five of the guests of the station and, strutting in front of the fire smoking his pipe, the cook, a filthy Irishman, who looked as though he scarcely knew what a bath was.

"Will you get my breakfast?" I asked him. "I plan to leave immediately after."

"Breakfast was served a long time ago," he replied stupidly without moving. "Everybody came to the table and I'm not going to do my job again."

"I don't want any back talk from you. Will you or won't you prepare my breakfast?"

"No, sir."

My nerves were set violently on edge. At this instant, the wife of the proprietor, who from the next room had heard everything, came to me.

"I will prepare your breakfast, sir. You can't expect anything from this brute. I am sorry that my husband left this morning. He would have brought this rascal to his senses. As for you," she said, addressing the Irishman, "you can get out at once."

"I don't know where to go," said the cook aside and sadly, but loudly enough for us to hear.

"Go to hell," cried the travelers, although not one of them had protested against the actions of the spoiler of sauces.

I was getting into my wagon, when one of the prospectors ran up to me.

"This scamp has taken the road to Los Angeles and you will undoubtedly

meet him. I suggest that you keep on your guard. This Irishman is one of the real scum of the country and he will surely seek revenge on you."

"Thanks for the warning," I replied. "I will keep my eyes open and if anything happens I'll break his head for him."

About two miles from Willow Springs I saw the Irishman, sitting by the roadside. As my wagon approached, he got up and, brandishing his stick, he made some coarse threats. He was not otherwise armed. I touched up my horses and passed by. Two days later I reached Los Angeles.

NOTES

1. From his book, *La Californie et les Etats du Pacifique—Souvenirs et Impressions*. The chapter, translated by Mr. Chickering from the French, appeared in the *Quarterly* under the heading "Bandits, Borax and Bears—A Trip to Searles Lake in 1874."

2. See Note 2 to "Bandits, Borax and Bears," in California Historical Society *Quarterly*, Vol. XVII, No. 2, June, 1938, p. 127; and Newmark, Harris, *Sixty Years in Southern California*, pp. 385-87.

3. In Los Angeles County. Not to be confused with the Soledad in Monterey County.

4. Probably Cameron.

5. See p. 7 of *Quarterly* cited above, and Note 7 on p. 115. Neill C. Wilson, in his *Silver Stampede* (N. Y.: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 127, describes this cañon in the El Paso Mountains as "a weird gash where the red cliffsides were eroded into shapes of organs, cathedrals, mitred bishops and congregations forever bowed in ossified prayer."

6. See pp. 105-6 of *Quarterly* cited above.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 110 and 116.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 110-12, 116-17.

9. Surprise Canyon.

10. The Surprise Valley Mill and Water Company. Senator Jones and Senator William M. Stewart bought for \$30,000 the toll road that ran up Surprise Canyon to Panamint. This had been built by Bart McGee and four others. Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 82 and 148.

11. Nick Perasich was the proprietor of the French Café at Panamint. He later went to Darwin, where he was killed by Bark Ashim. Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 173, 234-41.

12. The town of Darwin was named for Dr. Darwin French. It became a successor to Panamint in 1876. Furnaces were built, a printing office established, and hundreds of men were employed in the mines and mills. See Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 12, 24, 225-31, and Chalfant, W. A., *The Story of Inyo*, 1922, p. 268.

13. San Bernardino County.

MARIANO GUADALUPE VALLEJO

and SONOMA

A Biography and a History

By GEORGE TAYS

CHAPTER XII

THE "BEARS" ARRIVE

ON THE evening of June 13, 1846, a group of thirty-three horsemen assembled in the Napa Valley, and at eleven o'clock set out down the road toward Sonoma. After several miles, Ezekiel Merritt, who had led the enterprise since leaving the Sacramento, halted the cavalcade and ordered all to follow the stock trails that wound among the live-oaks.

At dawn this strange party arrived at the outskirts of Sonoma. They approached cautiously, but finding no one on guard, they rode boldly into the plaza and surrounded Vallejo's house. Several dismounted and with their pistol butts rapped on the great door. This awakened Vallejo from a sound sleep. He listened; then, alarmed and curious, he jumped out of bed and, in his night clothes and with a night-cap on his head, rushed to the window. To the right and left of his door was scattered a group of fierce-looking, armed, mounted men. Some had on flat coon-skin or coyote-skin caps, others wore low-crowned felt hats; still others had red cotton bandanna handkerchiefs tied around their heads. Most of them were garbed in dirty, greasy, buckskin shirts. They were a rough, sinister, ugly-looking group of men.¹

Vallejo realized that his plight was desperate. His wife begged him to flee by the back way, but Vallejo not only regarded that as an unworthy step but refused to abandon his family at such a critical moment. He dressed hurriedly in his uniform and, descending to the ground floor, ordered the great door opened. Immediately the hall was filled with a surging mob of armed men. Raising his voice above the hubbub, Vallejo asked for quiet.

"Gentlemen! What is it that you would have of me, and who is the leader among you?" he demanded.

"We're all leaders here!" was the response; and Vallejo repeated his question.

"Who is the person among you with whom I shall deal?" They pointed to Captain Ezekiel Merritt. Don Guadalupe turned to him and asked with a touch of sarcasm: "Mr. Merritt, to what happy circumstances shall I attribute the visit of so many exalted personages?" The ignorant trapper replied:

"I and the rest of these gentlemen in my company have resolved not to

continue to live any longer under the Mexican Government, whose representatives, Castro and Pico, do not respect the rights of Americans who live in this Department. Castro from time to time has issued proclamations treating us all as highwaymen, and so to put an end to so many insults, we have resolved to declare California independent. Towards you and your family we have no other feeling than regard, but we find ourselves under the necessity of taking you and your family prisoners."²

At this point, he walked Salvador Vallejio, José de la Rosa, Jacob P. Leese, and Victor Pruden, who, hearing the noise and commotion, had come to find out what was happening. The Americans at once placed the newcomers under arrest and proposed to keep them prisoners until they determined upon Don Canadalupe's fate. While Vallejio was trying to think of some way to rid himself of his unwelcome visitors, the Canadian, Oliver Beaulieu, went over to his house and brought back a barrel of brandy, which he distributed among Merritt's company. Soon the liquor made itself felt, and the men forgot the purpose of their undertaking. At this juncture, William Scott, John Sears, Oliver Beaulieu and others began to shout: "Let us loot! Let us loot!" The shouts attracted the attention of Dr. Robert Semple. Wrathfully he stepped to the front door. He threatened: "I shall shoot the first man who through robbery casts a blot upon this expedition, to whose origin I have contributed in carrying forward a political end. As long as there is any life left in me, I shall not permit it to become a looting expedition."³

Dr. Semple's harangue was immediately upheld by such worthy men as John Grigsby and Andrew Kelsey. Order having been restored, Vallejio suggested that they enter into some sort of negotiations. Whereupon all the members of the insurgent party withdrew except Semple, Merritt, William Knight, Sam Kelsey, and William Fallon.⁴

Vallejio remarked that there was no necessity to proceed upon an unfriendly basis, for he was greatly interested in what they were attempting to do. He sent a servant for glasses and bottles of his best brandy and wine. Merritt objected, "We cannot waste our time in drinking, we must get along with our work," but Semple and the others interposed. Under the congenial warmth of the stimulant, captors and prisoners relaxed and sat about the table, with Leese and Knight acting as interpreters. It soon became obvious that though the Americans regarded themselves as a revolutionary party, they had no definite plan of action, nor did they know what they intended to achieve beyond the seizure of government property, arms, and officers. They really had no acknowledged leader, and most of them merely wanted to obtain arms, animals and hostages, thus depriving the enemy of his resources. Finally they were under the impression that they were acting under orders, or at least on the advice of Captain Frémont.⁵

Don Canadalupe suggested to Semple that they might draw up some articles of capitulation. While they were preparing these, several rounds of drinks were served.

An hour went by. Meanwhile under the stimulus of Beaulieu's brandy, the crowd outside became impatient. "Why didn't the committee inside finish its job and bring out the prisoners?" was asked. Someone suggested that they elect a new leader in place of Merritt. A vote was called for. The name of John Grigsby was proposed and he was immediately elected captain by the acclamation of his tipsy companions.

"Go in and see what has happened, John, and then come out and tell us. See if you can't hurry them up."⁶

Within the house, great was his surprise at what he beheld. Captain Merritt, tall, rawboned frontiersman, who, on entering earlier in the morning, had charged on Salvador Vallejo like a mad tiger, ready to tear him limb from limb over an alleged insult of former days, was quiet now.

"Ah! Come in, John," said Merritt. "Sit down and have a drink."

"No! I did not come here for drinking. I am the new captain, and I want you to come out with me now."

"No! No! Come and have just one little drink," was the shouted chorus which drowned out Grigsby's protests. Much against his will he joined the happy party. One drink led to the next, and before long Grigsby also forgot the object of his mission.

Another hour passed; outside, the half-intoxicated crowd was growing more excited and unmanageable. When they had set out from Fremont's camp, all had proceeded smoothly, but now something mysterious was taking place. One by one their men were disappearing into the great house. Something had to be done. They called for Ide, one of the few sober men left, a scholarly, well-educated man. They sent him in, with special instructions to come out again at least.

What a sight greeted his eyes as he entered! He found that Merritt and his party had fallen willing victims to Vallejo's hospitality. On one side of the table sat Salvador Vallejo and Prudon, sober as judges. There also sat General Vallejo, who never drank. And there sat Merritt, his head resting upon his arms as he bowed over the table. There sat Knight, the ferryman of the Sacramento, interpreter for the expedition, with head bowed. Beside him sat the newly-made captain, John Grigsby, who was now too full for utterance. Across the table were William Fallon and Sam Kelsey, both showing the results of conviviality.

In another part of the room sat Leese and Dr. Semple still at work on the articles of capitulation. Tall, gigantic Dr. Semple, 6 feet, 8 inches, in his stocking feet, who sat with his long limbs curled and knotted about the legs of his chair, dentist, printer, usually confident and intelligent, was scarcely able to push his pen along the paper he was signing.⁷

Ide picked up a copy of the capitulation and read it over. One part was in Spanish and stated:

Be it known by these presents, that, having been surprised by a numerous armed force which took me prisoner, as well as the chiefs and officers belonging to the garrison of this post, of which the said force took possession, having found it absolutely defenceless, myself as well as the undersigned officers pledge our word of honor that, being under the guaranties of prisoners of war, we will not take up arms for or against the said armed force, from which we have received the present suggestion, and a signed writ which guarantees our lives, families, and properties, and those of all the residents of this jurisdiction, so long as we make no opposition.

(Signed) M. G. VALLEJO.

VICTOR PRUDON

SALVADOR VALLEJO⁸

Several copies of this were made by Salvador Vallejo and Victor Prudon. The English part, of which several copies were made by Semple, read as follows:

We the undersigned, having resolved to establish a government upon republican principles, in connection with others of our fellow-citizens, and having taken up arms to support it, we have taken three Mexican officers, Gen. M. G. Vallejo, Lieut-col. Victor Prudon, and Capt. Salvador Vallejo, having formed and published to the world no regular plan of government, feel it our duty to say that it is not our intention to take or injure any person who is not found in opposition to the cause, nor will we take or destroy the property of private individuals further than is necessary for our immediate support.

(Signed) EZEKIEL MERRITT.

WILLIAM FALLON.

SAMUEL KELSEY.⁹

Ide went outside to report. With the terms of the capitulation most of the rebels were not satisfied. They demanded that the prisoners be taken to Sutter's Fort. John Grigsby roused himself from his stupor and staggered to the door.

"What were Frémont's orders on this?" he demanded. No one seemed to know.

"We have been treated with indignity by the Californians. We have been ordered out of the country, and we take all orders and grievances into our own hands," was Ide's answer.

Grigsby cried angrily, "I thought we had the United States behind us. I have been deceived. I will not go on; but I will resign and take my family across the Sierra Nevada."

Confusion prevailed. No one seemed to know what to do, and they began to move away in groups.

At this moment Ide took things into his own hands. "Attention, men!" he called. "I want no fresh horse. I am going to stay and not be a coward. I began with honorable motives, and I will stay by them. So must you do or be disgraced. We must carry out our plan or be regarded as thieves and robbers." Ide's sober words gradually brought order. When he had finished they suddenly broke out into a cheer.

"Ide! Ide is our captain!" One of their number went up to Ide and said, "You are our commander. Go on and take the post."¹⁰

After the capitulation was finished and signed, Leese went home, the in-

insurgents went outside, and the Vallejos retired to other chambers. The agreement between the parties was short-lived, however. When Ide read its terms to his men, there was general disagreement as to what should be done with the prisoners. The majority favored sending them to the Sacramento. The leaders stood for their agreement, but it soon became apparent that they would not be allowed to keep their promises. Vallejo was not greatly displeased at the prospect of being sent to New Helvetia. He was assured that the insurgents were acting under Frémont's orders. He had no reason to doubt that as soon as he met Frémont he and his companions would be released on parole.¹¹

When Vallejo heard that he was to go, he sent a verbal message to his intimate friend, Captain John B. Montgomery, commander of the U. S. warship *Portsmouth*, then at Sausalito, by Don José de la Rosa. The messenger left the house unnoticed during the general excitement after Ide came into the conference room. Reaching the ship on the morning of June 15, he informed Captain Montgomery of what had happened at Sonoma, and in General Vallejo's name asked the Captain to use his authority or exert his influence to prevent the commission of acts of violence by the insurgents, since they seemed to be without head or leadership. Vallejo hoped that Montgomery might send an officer or a letter that would have the effect of saving the helpless inhabitants from violence, and anarchy.

Captain Montgomery replied verbally to Vallejo's message. He disavowed the insurrection as being under the authority either of the United States or of himself. The movement was entirely local, he stated, and he would not take part in it. If it was conducted by Americans they were beyond the jurisdiction of the laws and officers of the United States, and they were answerable only to the laws of Mexico and California. He added that this was the first information he had received of such a movement, so in making his disavowal he also did it on behalf of Captain Frémont. If it should lie in his power to prevent violence as an individual he would do so, but not as an officer of the United States Government. He could have nothing to do with either side. However, it was his belief that no violence would be committed on unarmed persons. He assured Vallejo of his sympathy in his difficulties, but he could not possibly interfere in local California politics.¹²

That same evening, however, Captain Montgomery changed his mind, and ordered Lieutenant John S. Missroon to go to Sonoma. In the orders Montgomery explained what had happened there and outlined his reply to Vallejo, but said that the urgent call of humanity made him deem it his duty to endeavor to aid the defenseless people of Sonoma to secure the protection of life and property and other privileges to which they were entitled. Missroon was to call on the leader of the insurgents and in a diplomatic manner tell him of the apprehensive and terror-stricken state of mind of the inhabitants. He was to request in Montgomery's name that the commander extend his pro-

tection over the defenseless families of the prisoners and the people of Sonoma. Missroon was also to visit the Alcalde and reassure him, after which he was to return to report. Early in the morning of June 16, Montgomery added a note instructing Missroon to impress upon the leaders of the revolt that it would be to their future advantage to pursue a kind and benevolent course toward the prisoners as well as toward the defenseless townspeople.¹³

Lieutenant Missroon reached Sonoma on June 16, at sunset, and found twenty-five men as a garrison. He called on Ide, who gave him verbal and written assurances of his intention to maintain order and to respect the persons and property of all inhabitants. He then went to the Alcalde, giving him a written pledge from Ide, called on Mrs. Vallejo and family, assuring them of the safety of the General and themselves, and on the evening of June 17 returned to the *Portsmouth*.¹⁴

Meanwhile, at 11:00 A. M. on June 14, the two Vallejos, Prudon, and Leese as interpreter, guarded by Grigsby, Semple, Merritt, Hargrave, Knight, and four or five others, set out for Sacramento. Vallejo expected to return within five days. He was confident that Frémont would release him and his companions on parole; then the Captain might be induced to move his camp to Sonoma. Semple, Grigsby, and Leese seemed to share the same opinion. On the night of the 14th, they camped at Vaca's ranch, now known as Vacaville. No guards were set out and the prisoners slept on a pile of straw near the camp, along with Léese.

Sometime before dawn of the 15th, a Californian rescue party surrounded the spot. Juan Padilla, the leader, crawled into the camp and informed Vallejo that he had a strong force ready to rescue him. Don Guadalupe refused to permit any such attempt. He thought it unnecessary, for he expected to be free on reaching the Sacramento and he feared retaliation at Sonoma in case they escaped and the guards were harmed.¹⁵

Late that afternoon the prisoners arrived at Frémont's camp on the American River and were taken before that officer. Since there were not enough chairs in his tent to go around, Frémont opened a chest and took out some canvas bags filled with silver coins. These served as seats for several of the prisoners, according to Vallejo. An awkward silence followed, then Don Guadalupe asked Frémont what he intended to do with them. He said he would consult his followers and soon decide. The men met in another tent, where they voted to execute the prisoners. Semple objected, and won back the prisoners' lives. After a time Frémont returned and told Vallejo that since they were not his prisoners, he had to submit to the men's wishes, which were that they should be sent to Sutter's Fort and locked up there. An hour later, they were again on the way and arrived at the Fort at sunset.¹⁶

On the way to the Fort, the prisoners were guarded by some twenty of Frémont's men, Merritt and Carson going in advance to notify Sutter of their coming. When the party arrived, Sutter greeted them and received Frémont's

San Francisco,
13th March 1888.

My dear Mr Vallejo:

I have seen
several parties with
reference to the Chihuahua
lands, but there seems to
be no disposition on their
part to take action in the
matter, so I return you
the enclosed papers thinking
they may be of some use
to you.

I am,

Yours very truly
James G Fair

LETTER FROM JAMES G. FAIR TO
MARIANO GUADALUPE VALLEJO

From the Melville Schweitzer Memorial Collection,
California Historical Society

R. M. D.

Luisa E. Vallejo
y
Ricardo de Emparan
participan á U. su enlace y se
ofrecen á sus órdenes en
San Diego de California.
Lachryma Montis.
Sonoma Agosto 23 de 1882.

INVITATION TO THE WEDDING OF LUISA VALLEJO
AND RICARDO DE EMPARAN

Presented to the Society by Mr. Fred M. DeWitt

verbal orders to take charge of them and to keep them inside until further notice. Sutter consented, and took them to a large room on the ground floor, which was almost devoid of furniture except for a few rough benches. When the prisoners entered, Sutter unceremoniously locked the door and left them there to pass the night with only the bare floor on which to sleep, without even a drink of water to quench their thirst, and thinking all night long about the ingratitude of Sutter for whom Vallejo had done so much. Morning came, but no one took heed of the prisoners, and it was 11:00 A. M. before Sutter opened the door and sent an Indian in with a pot of soup and meat, but without plates, knives, forks, or spoons with which to eat it. The prisoners were furious. Then it was that Vallejo regretted that he had not taken the offer of Cayetano Juarez and Padilla to escape two days before. Vallejo considered that June, 1846, was the blackest period of his life.¹⁷

Frémont did not trust Sutter. He was afraid he might sympathize with his brother officers and set them free, so he sent Edward M. Kern with a detachment of some twelve men to the Fort to guard the prisoners. It cannot be denied that the leaders of the rebels at Sonoma were unable to control their rough followers, and were forced to break their contract in the capitulation. But once the prisoners arrived at the Fort, Frémont was under no compulsion to carry on the policy of the "Bears." He did not have to put Vallejo in prison and keep him there, disregarding past pledges and present demands for justice and explanations. He should have had some consideration for Vallejo's rank, as a matter of military courtesy of one officer to another. And to treat them as he did notwithstanding their honorable character and Leese's nationality was a contemptible and inexcusable outrage. Vallejo's pride was deeply wounded, and he considered it the basest sort of ingratitude on the part of Americans whom he had treated so well.

Four days after the prisoners were confined at the Fort, José Noriega and Vicente Peralta happened to pass by on business. These two Californians were at once arrested and forced to join the other unhappy inmates. Then for some weeks Vallejo and his companions were kept closely locked up in rough, inconvenient quarters. They were given coarse food and were not allowed to communicate with their friends or families. What letters were allowed were closely examined and censored by Frémont's men. Not the slightest attention was paid to their appeal for justice, and their guards lost no opportunity to insult them.¹⁸

On June 28, 1846, Victor Prudon wrote to José de la Rosa, saying that they were still in prison and had no hopes of getting out, and were not allowed to communicate with anyone. He asked Rosa to call on his wife Teodora and tell her not to go out nor to allow the girls out on the street lest they be insulted. She was also to sell nothing, not even sugar, but to nail up the box. She was also to note everything that was taken, especially cows and oxen. Finally, the more she and the family remained indoors the better it would be. Rosa was asked to look after them and the Vallejos.¹⁹

During the latter part of June, still being uncertain about the prisoners, their families persuaded Julio Carrillo, Mrs. Vallejo's brother, to go to Sutter's Fort to get information. Lieutenant Missroon, at Sonoma, gave him a passport to and from the Fort. When Don Julio arrived he was permitted to see the prisoners, but Kern, whom Frémont had placed in charge, refused to allow him to leave and he was forced to join the unwilling ranks of the prisoners. A few days later, July 5, Robert Ridley, port captain of Yerba Buena, who had been captured by Semple at his home on July 2, entered the portals of New Helvetia, to join the hapless company.

Meanwhile, Vallejo and the others had been doing their utmost to find out why they were confined, and to obtain their release. On July 6, 1846, Don Guadalupe wrote to his brother José Jesus that they were not dead as rumored. They believed their imprisonment was only political, so they expected to be released as soon as the permanent change should come. Though their situation was bad, they owed Mr. Sutter their eternal gratitude for the many favors he had showed them. He said that they had been assured that they, their families and properties were to be respected, so they had nothing to fear. He asked Don José to publish the letter, adding in a postscript that Carrillo, Peralta, Noriega, and Ridley were there also.²⁰

Captain Montgomery had been doing what he could to relieve the suffering and the fears of the families in Sonoma. To that end he sent Lieutenant Washington A. Bartlett and Dr. Andrew J. Henderson to Sonoma early in July. The Doctor went to give aid to the sick, including one of the Vallejos. While there, they were guests of Mrs. Vallejo, so on July 6, Bartlett wrote to General Vallejo, briefly outlining the change that had taken place after Frémont took command, and stating that the families in Sonoma were safe and in good health and that Mrs. Vallejo was as cheerful as could be expected. They all hoped for his early return.²¹

As days passed, Vallejo continued to protest and to try to get an interview with Frémont. Naturally this could not be arranged, since the captain was in Sonoma. However, when he returned to Sacramento he was told about it, and on July 9 sent word to Vallejo that on the next day he would grant them an interview. The 10th came and slowly passed away, while the captives waited and waited, but no word came from Frémont. When the day had all but gone, Vallejo, realizing that he had been deceived, wrote to Frémont saying:

Yesterday I had the pleasure of receiving a note from you, by one of your officers, that today we would have an interview with you, the which I have been awaiting anxiously all day long; but since this is already very advanced, I fear that you will no longer have time. As much to calm the uneasiness of the gentlemen who share my prison, as well as for my own satisfaction, I wish that you would let me know whether our imprisonment is now ended, which as you know has been made more severe by an absolute solitary confinement since the 16th of last June.

I do not have to tell you anything regarding the way in which we have been deprived

of our liberty, since you are not ignorant of it; but the national flag of North America which today flies over this fortress leads me to suppose that the change has already taken place, and to expect an advantageous future for this country whose fate cannot be a matter of indifference to me.

Because of all this I flattered myself that today you would have told us of the proclamation which probably has been published on raising the flag, which today changes the future of California, and which can do no less than be of direct influence over us, whose intimate conviction is that the condition of the country can not be any worse than that in which it was before the change.²²

Frémont did not reply. He was busy preparing to leave for Monterey, and on the 12th he departed, leaving Kern in charge of the Fort with instructions not to release the prisoners except on his direct orders.

Meanwhile, Captain Montgomery was trying to obtain their release. He wrote to Commodore Sloat giving a list of all the prisoners and requesting authority for their release, especially that of General Vallejo. Though this was written on July 10, Captain Montgomery received no answer from Sloat, for some unknown reason.

Thomas O. Larkin, the American Consul, on July 16 wrote to Vallejo that as soon as the American flag had been raised at Monterey, he had sent word to Mrs. Leese informing the Vallejo family of the whereabouts of the prisoners. He said that Mrs. Vallejo senior, greatly troubled, had written asking him to send some trustworthy person to Sutter's Fort to ascertain their condition. Larkin then hired John Murphy in Vallejo's name, for 100 pesos, to go to Sacramento and return with Vallejo's letter to his mother.²³

Vallejo received Larkin's letter on July 22, and replied by the same messenger the next day. He thanked Larkin for his efforts in their behalf, for which they would be indebted forever, and begged him to ask Sloat for their release.²⁴

Prudon also wrote to Larkin. He complained bitterly of their unjust and prolonged imprisonment, begging Larkin to use his influence to have them liberated, for their situation was most lamentable, and its horrors were augmented by their absolute lack of communication; they were unable to learn what was happening in the world outside, while their families were ignorant of what they were suffering in prison. Prudon added that they were preparing a representation to Commodore Sloat, who was probably unaware of the iniquitous treatment they were receiving.²⁵

Vallejo wrote a long letter to Sloat in which he reviewed their capture and confinement. He said that since June 16 they had been suffering a rigorous imprisonment under special orders not to communicate with anyone. All things sent to them were examined by Kern before being delivered and their private mail was read. They now solicited Sloat's protection, confident that it would not be in vain. Since circumstances had changed, wrote Vallejo, and the United States now presided over the destinies of California, he and his fellow officers were ready to pledge their neutrality and to adhere to any conditions which might be imposed.²⁶

These letters from the prisoners were delivered to Larkin on the morning of July 29. That same evening Larkin wrote to Leese acknowledging their receipt. Commodore Sloat was then some miles out to sea on his way home in the *Levant*, but Larkin took a small boat and sailed out to the warship, and read Vallejo's letter to the Commodore. He then returned and delivered it to Commodore Stockton, who had succeeded Sloat in command. John Murphy was sent hurrying back to Sutter's Fort to inform the prisoners that on July 27 a messenger had been sent to Captain Montgomery with orders for their release. Murphy was instructed to return at once in case the orders had not been complied with. Larkin also sent the Commodore's reply to Vallejo, first to the *Portsmouth* and then direct to New Helvetia. The messenger was to have no other business than to see Don Guadalupe, then to return to Larkin with the results of his mission. Larkin commiserated with the prisoners, as he had supposed that on the raising of the American flag they had been set free. He praised Vallejo's letter to Sloat as well-written, mild, firm and respectful, and fully to the purpose. Stockton replied to Vallejo that night, at Larkin's request, as he was to sail south the next day to be gone twenty-five or thirty days. Larkin said that if things did not go as they should, Murphy was to return to Captain Montgomery, or to Captain Mervine, who was in command at Monterey. It was Larkin's belief that Leese and Vallejo would do well to call on Commodore Stockton soon. He said it was not for him to question the motives of those who had captured them, as he knew nothing about them, and that he had told both Frémont and Gillespie he could not understand their imprisonment and thought they should have been set free at the time. Larkin hoped that the great benefits the prisoners would derive from the increased values of their properties, due to the change of flag, would in part compensate them for their sufferings. He also supposed that in proper time the authors of the act would give their reasons and motives for it.²⁷

With Larkin's letter went Stockton's reply to Vallejo of the same date, which read:

Dear Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23d inst. addressed to my predecessor, Commodore Sloat.

I hasten to inform you that one of the first acts of my administration was to order your immediate release from confinement; and I hope that before this reaches you, that you will be at liberty.

I was not aware of the names and rank of the others confined with you. I now send by a courier (notwithstanding I have already sent one today) to Captain Montgomery for the release of your friends as well as yourself.

I have the honor to be with great respect and consideration your obedient and very humble servant

R. F. STOCKTON²⁸

When Captain Montgomery received the Commodore's order on August 3, he at once wrote to Vallejo:

My dear sir:

I have derived a sincere gratification from having it in my power several days since, through the kindness of the commander-in-chief (Commodore Stockton) of forwarding by express to Fort Sacramento an order for your immediate release from confinement which as it separated you from your interesting family, could not have been otherwise than painful, irksome and disturbing to them and to yourself. I have now, sir, the additional satisfaction to say that reposing full confidence in your honor and sincerity I have directed Lieutenant Revere to whom this will introduce you, to mitigate the terms of your parole, by obtaining from you simply a promise of friendship to the United States or of strict neutrality in all differences pending between the existing and former governments of the Department of California, which will leave you fully at large to attend to your business concerns without hindrance or restraint.

J. B. MONTGOMERY.²⁹

Captain Montgomery's order to Lieutenant Revere for Vallejo's liberation, was as follows:

By order of Commodore Robert F. Stockton, who has succeeded to the command of the U. S. Forces in the Pacific Ocean and California, you will please liberate General Don Guadalupe Vallejo and Don Julio Carrillo from confinement to return to their homes on their parole of honor not to take arms, instigate, or directly or indirectly participate in any movement against the authorities of the United States in California; and not to leave their proper district until regularly exchanged, without permission from the officer at Yerba Buena.³⁰

J. B. MONTGOMERY.

Evidently Montgomery had sent a previous order to New Helvetia for Vallejo's release on July 29, which Kern had refused to obey. Lieutenant Revere then took the second order to Sacramento in person and released Vallejo and Carrillo sometime on August 3. The other prisoners, not being mentioned by name, were not freed because Kern refused to do so without an order from Frémont. Left behind in their dungeons when Vallejo was set free, were Prudon, Salvador Vallejo, Leese, Noriega, Peralta, and Ridley. Vallejo was quite ill at the time of his release, and was on the point of exhaustion by the time he arrived home on the 6th. Word of his condition was sent to Captain Montgomery, who at once dispatched Dr. Andrew J. Henderson, assistant surgeon of the *Portsmouth*, to attend him. At the same time he instructed Lieutenant Bartlett to write Vallejo, which he did that same day,³¹ expressing Captain Montgomery's regret that he had not been liberated when the American flag was raised. Evidently Vallejo had written on July 30 complaining that he had not been released on the first order.

As soon as Vallejo arrived in Sonoma he busied himself in trying to obtain the release of his companions. He wrote to them on August 4 telling them that a launch was leaving San Francisco with orders for their release. The launch, however, for some reason was delayed and more letters were exchanged.³²

To prevent further delays in the release of the other prisoners, Captain Montgomery sent Lieutenant Missroon to Sutter's Fort with instructions to parole the prisoners, which he did on August 8, 1846.³³

On August 12, Vallejo expressed his gratitude to Captain Montgomery for having sent Dr. Henderson to attend him during the illness which he had contracted in prison. Due to Dr. Henderson's care he had recovered more quickly than had been expected. He thanked Montgomery for all those particular services which he assured him would never be forgotten.³⁴

As a last soothing gesture to Vallejo's feelings, Captain Montgomery wrote him this short note on September 9:

My dear friend:

The Commander-in-chief is now here and I desire much to have the pleasure of presenting you to him. I have made him acquainted with your friendly zeal and service—which I am persuaded he mightily appreciates—and that he will be pleased to see you.

My boat is at your service and I need not tell you my dear Sir of the pleasure it will afford me to see you here again.

Be pleased to present my respectful regards to Madam Vallejo and family, and believe me your friend.

J. B. MONTGOMERY.³⁵

His release from Sutter's Fort and his return to Sonoma, closed the incident of the "Bear Flag" filibuster as far as Vallejo was concerned.

CHAPTER XIII

AN OPEN-HANDED GENTLEMAN

WHEN VALLEJO returned to his peaceful pursuits as a ranchero, he was on parole and therefore took no part in public affairs. At Sonoma everything was quiet, it being kept so by Lieutenant Joseph W. Revere and the garrison consisting of Company B of the California Battalion, under Captain John Grigsby.

Don Guadalupe accepted Captain Montgomery's invitation to visit him on board the *Portsmouth* and to be presented to Commodore Stockton. On October 1, 1846, he journeyed to Yerba Buena, to greet the Commodore when he arrived to celebrate his triumph after the successful campaign in Los Angeles. Stockton was given a great reception when he landed from his barge on October 5 at what is now Clay Street, between Montgomery and Sansome. William H. Russell delivered a flowery address of welcome. Vallejo as a prominent member of the reception committee took part in the procession which marched up to and around the plaza, returning to Montgomery Street to listen to a speech from Stockton. Among other festivities of that week was a great ball in honor of the Commodore, given at Leidesdorff's residence. After enjoying these social affairs, Vallejo returned to Sonoma, to continue his secluded life.¹

About this time there was a rumor that hostile Walla Walla Indians were invading the Sacramento Valley, to revenge the murder of one of their tribe by an American. Lieutenant Revere at once took his company there, and commissioned Vallejo and his brother Salvador to protect Sonoma and the fron-

tier with a force of Christian Indians.² The Walla Walla incident, however, proved to be a false alarm.

As the New Year opened, the conquest of California appeared to be assured by the victory of Commodore Stockton and General Kearny at Los Angeles, and Vallejo seems to have been released from parole and to have returned to public life. When he appointed Frémont as governor, Commodore Stockton, on January 16, 1847, also appointed a legislative council of seven members: M. G. Vallejo, David Spence, J. B. Alvarado, Thomas O. Larkin, Eliab Grimes, Santiago Argüello, and Juan Bandini. The council was summoned to convene at Los Angeles on March 1. At the time of his appointment, Vallejo was mourning the loss of his three-year-old son, Guadalupe, who had died on January 11, 1847. This was the third son he had lost and his grief was great. Because of his bereavement, Vallejo delayed his departure. When he was ready to go, he found that Stockton and Kearny had become involved in a heated controversy over the question of supremacy of command. In order not to be drawn into this disagreeable quarrel, several of the council members declined to serve, with the result that no meetings were ever held.³

One of the most pressing matters to which Vallejo gave his attention early in March, 1847, was the relief of the snow-bound Donner party. He and Captain Joseph B. Hull, of the United States Navy, organized a public meeting at which a subscription was started. Vallejo opened it by donating several hundred dollars, and within a short time \$1,500 was raised to aid the sufferers.⁴

Nor did this end his public activities, for on April 14, 1847, to quiet hostile Indian depredations that had continued under American rule, General Kearny appointed Vallejo Indian sub-agent for the Sonoma district, which extended from Cache Creek on the east, to Clear Lake on the north, and to the ocean on the west. No person was better qualified to undertake this task than General Vallejo, which he did at a salary of \$750 a year. Sutter received a like appointment for the Sacramento Valley. Vallejo handled the situation promptly and soon restored order. In April, 1848, he offered his resignation, but Governor Mason refused to accept it, and he thus continued to serve until the end of that year.⁵

While he was busy keeping the northern Indians peaceful, Vallejo still had time to engage in a grand scheme for building a new city on the Strait of Carquinez. The General, with Robert Semple as partner, began to develop plans for founding the city which they hoped would rival Yerba Buena and eventually grow to be not only the chief seaport but also the capital of California. On December 22, 1846, Vallejo deeded to Semple an undivided half interest in a tract of five square miles of his Soscol ranch. The deed was recorded at Sonoma and at San Francisco. The town was to be named Francisca, in honor of Vallejo's wife, Doña Francisca Benicia Carrillo Vallejo. By this development, it was Don Mariano's hope to increase the value of his remain-

ing land. The promoters also hoped to capitalize upon the name Francisco, but the citizens of Yerba Buena deflected this move by adopting the name San Francisco for their town. This forced Semple to change the name of the town to Benicia, Señora Vallejo's middle name.

During the spring of 1847, Semple took Larkin into the scheme as a partner. On May 18, Semple deeded back to Larkin half of the property to Vallejo, who next day redeeded it to Semple and Larkin, for a nominal consideration of \$100, reserving only a few town lots for himself.

Early in June, 1847, Semple moved to Benicia to start building a ferry, and took Jasper Ottumrell with him to survey the town site. During the summer, there was much activity at the new city; some lots were sold, lumber for buildings was ordered, and an extensive advertising campaign was begun. By the spring of 1848, over 200 town lots had been sold, some twenty buildings had been erected, and a ferry to the south shore and boat service to San Francisco had been established. Vallejo also had sent some Indians to Benicia to build a house for him.

When the Gold Rush started, the town's future seemed bright indeed. But Larkin, becoming involved in profitable business deals in San Francisco, neglected his interests at Benicia, leaving all in the hands of Semple. Vallejo, too, was busy with affairs at Sonoma. Semple, however, carried on the work industriously and with a faith and enthusiasm in his new city as great as was his disgust at the comparative lukewarmness of his partners. His infant town grew slowly. For a time it seemed that he might be able to establish the capital there, but that soon proved a vain hope. Many believed, however, that opportunistic cooperation mixed with a little good luck in 1848-49, might have made Benicia a worthy and really formidable rival to San Francisco.⁶

While Vallejo was busy with his numerous enterprises, his family was increasing in number. On November 13, 1847, a son was born to Señora Vallejo, who was given the name of Plutarco. Since the Vallejo's had lost the first Plutarco, they wished to perpetuate the name in the family. However, the infant lived but a few months, dying on February 3, 1848; the eleventh child to be born, and the fourth to die in the family.

Although the discovery of gold on January 24, 1848, at Coloma was supposed to have been a closely guarded secret, Sutter wrote to Vallejo soon after, telling him about it. Before long it had become generally known and the small frontier town of Sonoma with its 260 inhabitants buzzed with excitement. People gathered in the plaza to discuss the momentous news. Vallejo urged caution, and it was decided that Alcalde Boggs should go to Sutter's Fort to learn the truth of the fabulous reports. When he returned some days later with samples of the gold and confirmed the stories, the male population of the town packed up and departed for the diggings, leaving their businesses and families to take care of themselves as best they might.

Soon after the gold discovery, Governor Mason, with his aide, Lieutenant

William T. Sherman, and a party came to Sonoma on his way to visit Sacramento and the gold fields. With their arrival came a new hope that people starting for the diggings from San Francisco would go overland by the north side of the Bay, thus using Sonoma as a base for supplies. Expectations ran high that Sonoma would soon become the metropolis of the northern frontier. For several years that hope persisted, but like Benicia's rosy dreams, nothing came of it. The northern route to the mines proved too roundabout for the impatient gold-seekers, who preferred the more direct water route, or that overland by way of the Contra Costa. Though to one side, Sonoma, the charming village, still nursed hopes for future greatness. With the passing of the first excitement of the gold-rush, Sonoma's inhabitants turned again to more normal pursuits. Political matters, however, were in a state of chaos. The United States Congress had failed to provide California with any definite type of local government or laws. Government of a semi-military order was carried on by the military commanders. Due to the resulting confusion, Vallejo and all the great landholders of California began to experience increasing difficulties in keeping their possessions. The ever-increasing flood of settlers spread everywhere. Many settled on Vallejo's land, some without even asking his permission. It was difficult, in fact almost impossible, to evict these squatters, for there were no definite laws governing the matter, and had there been there was no competent authority to enforce them. Furthermore, a growing public sentiment sanctioned the acts of the trespassers.

Vallejo, who had always been generous with his wealth, was lavish with it in his treatment of the new settlers. He often gave Americans permission to occupy land to be farmed on shares, without demanding a written agreement, later to find that the beneficiaries had taken advantage of his generosity and good nature to defraud him of his property. It was partly to remedy this political chaos that Brigadier General Bennet Riley, who had arrived in California on April 12, 1849, as governor, called for a general election on August 1 to choose delegates to a constitutional convention.

At the August election, thirty-seven delegates were chosen, four of them from the Sonoma district, among whom were M. G. Vallejo, Robert Semple, and Joel P. Walker. The delegates assembled in Colton Hall in Monterey for the first session on September 3, 1849. Robert Semple was elected as chairman of the convention, and Vallejo became the spokesman for the small group of Spanish speaking Californians, consisting of Pedro Sainsevain, José M. Covarrubias, Antonio M. Pico, Jacinto Rodriguez, Pablo de la Guerra, José Antonio Carrillo, Manuel Dominguez, and Miguel de Pedrarena. These men, though forced to speak through an interpreter, took a considerable part in the debates and proceedings.

Throughout September, the delegates labored and in the end produced an excellent constitution. The convention finally finished its labors on October 13, 1849. The committee chosen to present the finished document to Governor

Riley was composed of Robert Semple, Johann August Sutter and Mariano G. Vallejo.

Governor Riley forthwith issued a proclamation calling for a general election on November 13, 1849, to ratify the constitution and to choose officials for the new State government. The constitution was approved and the members of the State legislature, with Peter Burnett as governor, met at the new capital, San José,⁷ in December, 1849.

M. G. Vallejo was elected State senator for the Sonoma District. One of the matters acted upon at the first session was the division of the State into counties, and the establishment of their boundaries. Pablo de la Guerra was the chairman of the committee on counties, and Vallejo one of its members. In the course of this work the latter made an interesting report on the derivation of the twenty-seven county names selected.

One of the greatest errors committed by the first legislature was its failure to select a permanent location for the State capital. Instead, the question was left open to election between the towns aspiring to the honor. Monterey, San Jose, Sacramento, and Vallejo made bids for it. General Vallejo here saw another chance to enhance the value of his property. Accordingly he made a splendid offer to the State on condition that his land at the mouth of Napa River be selected as the site. The new town was to be named Eureka. Vallejo offered a tract of 156 acres as a site for public buildings, and \$370,000 within two years for buildings, \$125,000 of which was to be for the capitol. This offer was made on April 3, 1850, and was accepted by act of February 4, 1851. The name of the town, however, was changed to Vallejo. The General began work at once, but difficulties sprang up on all sides. When the legislature opened its third session, on January 5, 1852, only a few rough houses had been built. The \$125,000 capitol was only a two-story building, and there was no place for the legislators to live. After a week of discomforts the legislature adjourned to the more attractive city of Sacramento. In March, 1852, a great flood drove the lawmakers from Sacramento, and the next session of January 5, 1853, began at Vallejo once again. As the place had not improved during the year, the government moved once more, this time to Benicia. Then it was that Don Guadalupe asked to be released from his bond. This request was granted and he sold the Vallejo townsite to Lieutenant-Governor Purdy, for \$30,000, but failing to receive payments, was forced to take back the property. At the expiration of his term as State senator at the end of 1853, Vallejo did not seek reelection.⁸

During the years that the General had spent as an official of the State government, his family had grown. On January 21, 1849, a baby daughter was born into the family, who was named Benicia, for her mother. She was the twelfth child, and the fifth girl. The following year, on December 8, 1850, a boy was born. This son was named Napoleon P. Vallejo. Perhaps the rise of Napoleon III in France influenced the father in the choice of the name.

At the beginning of his last session in the legislature, Vallejo was called back to Sonoma by the illness of his four-year-old daughter, Benicia, who passed away on January 31, 1853. This blow was softened, however, when Señora Vallejo gave birth to another girl baby, on April 30, 1853. This child was named Benicia Ysabel, to take the place of the one just lost.

Meanwhile in 1850, as the family was increasing in number and the older children were growing up into young ladies and gentlemen, Vallejo decided to build a new home and abandon the great adobe building on the Sonoma plaza. He selected a site about a half a mile to the north of the old home, at the base of a hill from which bubbled a spring of clear, fresh, cold water. An Indian legend was connected with this spring, which concerned an Indian maiden who had lost her lover in one of the tribal wars. At the foot of the mountain she had waited in vain for her lost lover, and there had wept out her sorrow. Her tears now bubbled and gushed out from among the rocks. In keeping with this tale, Vallejo named his home site "Lachryma Montis" (tear of the mountain). In this beautiful location, he erected a fine house built upon American lines. He also laid out spacious gardens in which were planted oranges and other fruits, as well as shade trees and flowering shrubs. These were watered by playing fountains fed from an artificial lake on the hillside, into which the spring emptied. In the grounds he also erected a Swiss chalet which had been brought complete from Europe around the Horn. By the time the estate was completed in 1852, it had cost Vallejo more than \$150,000.⁹ Soon after the family moved into the new home, the old house on the plaza was partially destroyed by fire.

By 1851, Vallejo's oldest daughter, Epifania, had blossomed into a beautiful young woman of seventeen. At the time a young United States army officer, Captain John B. Frisbie, was in command of the troops at Sonoma. Belle and soldier met, and on April 3, 1851, a brilliant wedding took place in the old adobe mansion on the plaza, which was attended by all the rural society for miles around.¹⁰

The next wedding to take place was that of Adelayda. She too met a young man to her liking, the younger brother of Captain Frisbie. On July 26, 1853, Adelayda Vallejo, then seventeen, and L. C. Frisbie were married. In the spacious parlor of Lachryma Montis to the tune of the wedding march, played on one of the three first pianos in California, and before a great company of guests, the two young people were united.

Despite these joyous occasions, the General's affairs were not prospering. Squatters were continually encroaching upon his possessions. Some of his land grants had been questioned and he was involved in expensive and long litigations to establish their validity. Furthermore, he had several claims against the Government for damages and loss of property due to the "Bear Flag" revolt and the conquest. One of these claims was for \$117,000 for stock, grain, and other property either borrowed or stolen. In 1854, after years of

litigation, the Claims Commission allowed Vallejo but \$48,700. Another claim pending for years was the one of \$20,600 for rent of his buildings in Sonoma for seven years, from 1846 to 1853. Not until 1856 was \$12,600 paid him on this account.¹¹ The question of his land grants dragged on in the courts for years, and by the time the cases were settled at least half of his once vast holdings had been denied him. Yet, in spite of his heavy losses, Vallejo continued to help the needy settlers who often arrived in California bereft of all resources. Not infrequently those very persons most benefited by his generosity repaid him with the basest kind of ingratitude. The most notorious of these cases was that of James G. Fair. When he arrived in Sonoma in 1852, this young Irishman had nothing but the shirt on his back. However, he attracted Vallejo's attention. With the General's aid he soon became established and was appointed town constable. Later in the decade when the Nevada mines began to open up, Vallejo lent Fair several thousand dollars as a "stake." He gave Vallejo his note for it. Years later Fair had become one of the richest men in the west. Meanwhile, Don Guadalupe had neglected to collect on the note, believing that he could trust his friend. In the sixties, however, finding himself in straightened circumstances, he remembered the thousands of dollars Fair owed him and tried to collect. At that time Fair was worth millions, but nevertheless he refused to honor his note. Needing the money badly, Vallejo took the matter to court, only to discover that it was outlawed. Exasperated by the base ingratitude of the former pauper, he declared that: "the laws were made for scoundrels."¹²

While General Vallejo was constantly harassed by financial and business worries during the 1850's, he was beset by other troubles. Early in March, 1854, his eldest son, Andronico II, then twenty years of age, died. This was a sad blow to the entire family.

In the spring of 1852, at the age of eleven years, Platon was sent via Panama to school at Mount St. Mary's College, Baltimore, Maryland. His record was so brilliant that he remained there until 1859, when he was graduated at the age of eighteen. That same year he entered the College of Physicians and Surgeons, in Columbia University, New York, from which he was graduated first in his class of seventy-two, receiving the faculty prize. The high scholastic honors won by his son were indeed gratifying to Vallejo.¹³

The Vallejo family was noted for the good looks of all its members. Caroline Larkin, daughter of Thomas O. Larkin, while visiting her uncle, Captain J. B. R. Cooper, at Sonoma, wrote to her parents on May 24, 1854:

Dear Papa and Mamma, Uncle Cooper is going away tomorrow. All the Vallejo family are very handsome, I think. The youngest girl who is a year old [Benicia Ysabel] has curls all over her head and large black eyes, with very long eyelashes. Mrs. Vallejo is handsome, I can't tell whether she is kind . . .¹⁴

Little Miss Larkin need not have worried about Señora Vallejo, for she was noted throughout the country for her kindness.

On January 27, 1856, a new addition to the family arrived in the person of an infant daughter who was named Luisa. She was the fifteenth child and seventh daughter. Seventeen months later, the last member of the Vallejo family saw the light of day at Lachryma Montis, on May 11, 1857. She was named Maria Ygnacia, and was the eighth girl and the sixteenth child of this large and gifted family. On January 13, 1859, death cast its shadow over the Vallejo mansion once again. This time it was the curly-headed six-year-old Benicia Ysabel who took sick and died.

Early in 1860, Sonoma welcomed the arrival from Hungary of Colonel A. Haraszthy. He was a man gifted in the art of wine making. After convincing the inhabitants that the land and climate were exactly suited for the production of the best of grapes and wine, he returned to Europe in 1861 to study the latest methods of wine production. He returned to Sonoma in 1862 with his two sons, Attila and Arpad, to aid him in the new enterprise. The two young expert champagne makers were elated with the prospects, but they were even more enthusiastic over the beauty of two of the Vallejo girls. Their affection was ardently reciprocated by the young ladies in question, for on June 1, 1863, Lachryma Montis was the scene of a splendid double wedding. Natalia Vallejo married Attila Haraszthy, and Jovita became the bride of Arpad Haraszthy. It was the social event of the year in Sonoma.

Shortly thereafter, General Vallejo set out on a trip to the East via Panama. The Civil War was in progress, and his son Platon had joined the Union forces just before graduating from medical school, and was doing medical work at the front. His baptism under fire took place in August, 1862, at the second battle of Bull Run. General Vallejo and Platon had several interviews with President Lincoln, while they were in Washington. At the conclusion of the war, Platon, having received his doctor's degree from Columbia University, soon afterward returned to California, where he at once became surgeon on a Pacific Mail steamer plying between San Francisco and Panama. In 1866, on a return trip, he met the young and beautiful Lilly Poole Wiley, daughter of James Wiley of Syracuse, New York. A year later, on November 14, 1867, the two were married at Lachryma Montis.¹⁵

Sonoma was increasing in population and after it was incorporated as a town in 1850, became the county seat. This revived its lost ambitions. For the next five years the town grew and enjoyed a brisk trade in lumber and other products. By 1852, however, a rival town was growing up at Santa Rosa, some miles to the north. The new community, with no Mexican traditions to hold it back, was full of the enterprise of the new American settlers who were building it. By 1854, Santa Rosa began to bid for the county seat. This split the people of the county into two factions, one of which advocated continuing the use of the dilapidated adobe court-house at Sonoma. Santa Rosa went ahead with its plans, refusing to take "No" for an answer. It managed to get the Grand Jury to condemn the Sonoma court-house, and began

building its own. Meanwhile, a delegation from Santa Rosa visited the legislature and engineered a bill giving the voters of Sonoma County the right to vote on the question of changing the county seat. Santa Rosa then held a great barbecue (July, 1854) to which the entire population of the county was invited. Hundreds came from miles around and partook generously of the city's liberal hospitality. In September the vote was taken and Santa Rosa won by a handsome majority. Sonoma, however, refused to give up the county records and prepared to defend them by force, if necessary, while the case was appealed in the courts. But Santa Rosa was not to be denied. Early one Sunday morning a band of hardy Santa Rosans, armed and ready for any eventuality, backed up to the old Sonoma court-house in a light wagon drawn by two stout mules. They picked the lock, kidnapped the county records, loaded them into the wagon, and disappeared up the road in a cloud of dust, before the astonished citizens of Sonoma realized what had happened. It was a blow from which Sonoma never recovered. Even its lumber business soon declined, for the neighboring timber had been depleted, and the industry had centered at Santa Rosa, nearer the source of supply.¹⁶

With the arrival of Colonel A. Haraszthy in Sonoma, in 1860, the town took on a more hopeful outlook. His enthusiasm convinced Sonoma that its destiny lay in the culture of the vine, and to that task the citizens dedicated themselves assiduously. By 1870, with hopes reborn, Sonoma was bidding fair to be the wine center of California, but it lacked modern transportation. Efforts were made to secure a railroad. In 1875, this was partly accomplished when the Sonoma Valley Prismoidal Railway Company built a short single-track, narrow gauge line from Norfolk, on Steamboat Slough, to Sonoma six miles distant, to connect with the San Francisco boats.¹⁷ This was not enough, however, and in 1878 the Sonoma Valley Railway Company took over the line and extended it. In 1888, the Southern Pacific built a branch line from Napa to Sonoma and Santa Rosa and in 1890, the Northwestern Pacific also entered the field, but Sonoma failed to receive full benefit from these facilities, for its citizens short-sightedly refused to grant the companies good rights of way and station facilities in the town.

Nevertheless, the wine industry prospered, and by 1900 Sonoma was known throughout the world. Its hills were honeycombed with underground vaults where millions of gallons of wine and champagne were aging. All went well until 1919 when national prohibition went into effect. Thinking that this reform was here to stay, the people of Sonoma closed their wineries, rooted up their vineyards and prepared to follow other lines of business. Sonoma's dreams and hopes of grandeur had collapsed, and destiny had once more cast the unfortunate town aside. Since repeal, Sonoma has been trying to rekindle its lost hopes and to recapture its past glory as the wine capital of the nation.

Vallejo, like the town he founded, suffered from misfortunes. By 1870 his luck had turned, his fortunes were on the wane and were eventually to end in

total eclipse. Most of his wealth had been lost or stolen and he was living in very reduced circumstances at Lachryma Montis. He was often invited to social functions, however. In this he delighted, for he was a fluent speaker, gifted with a keen wit and a sense of humor. On his frequent trips to San Francisco he often delighted the guests at the Palace Hotel, where he habitually put up, with thrilling tales of the early days in California as he had known them.¹⁸ Guillermo Prieto, a Mexican poet who visited San Francisco with General José M. Iglesias, as a political exile in 1877, wrote of him:

Among our visitors, one who made a most profound impression upon me was General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo. General Vallejo is now a man of over 70, but broad shouldered and active as any youth, with not a trace of white in his black hair and stormy whiskers. Laughter comes easily to his lips, and his speech is ready and salty.¹⁹

In the closing years of his life Vallejo could still look at life and laugh despite his losses and his sorrows, and thus it was to the end. He was ever the genial, generous host though his fortunes had shrunk to insignificance, and a mortgage hung over his lovely home. His family had now grown up, but he was always their father and counsellor. On October 2, 1875, his son Napoleon married Miss Martha Brown, at another one of those renowned Lachryma Montis weddings, though perhaps the former splendor was missing. Then on May 5, 1878, his daughter Jovita died, which caused the General much grief for she was his favorite daughter. The following year, on May 12, 1879, his youngest daughter married James H. Cutter at the family home. The last wedding to take place among his children was that of his daughter Luisa, who married Ricardo de Emparan, a Spaniard. This also took place at Lachryma Montis (August 23, 1882). This young lady, the only child of Vallejo living today, was also the only one of the family to marry a person of Spanish blood.

By 1885, General Vallejo had seen his family grow up and the survivors happily married and going their separate ways. Well along in years, he and his wife lived quietly at Lachryma Montis. Time passed slowly as he sat in his rocker on the broad verandas of his home, gazing out over the beautiful valley he had helped to develop. On July 7, 1889, he celebrated his 82nd birthday, and he still seemed hale and hardy. Late in December, however, he began to fail, and at the opening of the new year, he took to his bed. His favorite son, Doctor Platon Vallejo, was in attendance. Slowly his life stream ebbed, and his great and generous heart grew weak. By January 17 all hope for his recovery was gone. As evening fell, the lights burned low in Lachryma Montis; as low as the sinking life within, as low as the hopes in the hearts of his many Sonoma friends who, with voices hushed, awaited the inevitable hour. That night the editor of the Sonoma *Tribune-Index*, H. H. Granice, held up his press to await the outcome, so that his Saturday edition of January 18, 1890, might be the first to proclaim the sorrowful news of the great man's

passing. The editor's daughter Celeste, a girl of twelve, was sent to the home as the reporter to cover the event.

All evening she waited, yet the dying General held on to the last vital spark. The night was cold, and the waiting child grew sleepy, as the silent press stood still, hungry for that bit of news that would send it clattering to work. Weary with watching, she fell asleep. It was almost dawn when she was rudely awakened by a member of the family who told her that the General had breathed his last. Breathlessly she ran back to the pressroom to convey the news.

Outside, the pale light of a waning moon bathed the garden of Lachryma Montis in ghostly splendor, while within, at 4:00 A. M. on Saturday, January 18, 1890, the pulse of the stricken Don was stilled. Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, generous and valiant Californian, was dead.²⁰

NOTES TO CHAPTER XII

1. The description of the men, their actions, and of events just prior and subsequent to the taking of Sonoma, are as varied as the number of authors. No two accounts agree, and it is impossible to determine the truth of their statements. H. H. Bancroft, *Hist. Cal.*, V, 101-19, is as good an authority to follow as any.

As nearly as can be determined, the thirty-three men who went to Sonoma were: Ezekiel Merritt, William Brown Ide, John Grigsby, Robert Semple, Henry L. Ford, William L. Todd, William Fallon, William Knight, William Hargrave, Samuel Kelsey, Granville P. Swift, Samuel Gibson, William W. Scott, Benjamin Dewell, Thomas Cowie, William B. Elliott, Thomas Knight, Horace Sanders, Henry Bocker, David Hudson, John Sears, J. H. Kelly, C. C. Griffith, Harvey Porterfield, John Scott, Ira Stebbins, Marion Wise, Peter Storm, Henry Fowler, John Gibbs, Andrew Kelsey, Pat McChristian, and Bartlett Vines. Ferguson and Benjamin Kelsey may or may not have been in the party instead of two of the others. *Ibid.*, V, 110. See also M. G. Vallejo, *Hist. Cal.*, MS, V, 114-15; W. Baldrige, "Days of '46," MS, pp. 43-45.

2. Vallejo, *op. cit.*, V, 111-12.

3. *Ibid.*, V, 113.

4. Z. S. Eldredge, *Hist. Cal.*, III, 43-45.

5. *Ibid.*, III, 43-45; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 112-13; Vallejo, *op. cit.*, V, 113-14.

6. T. M. Price, *An Historic Narrative of the Bear Flag Revolution*, pp. 11-12.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13; T. H. Schoonover, *The Life and Times of Gen. J. A. Sutter*, p. 98; Mrs. F. H. Day, "Dr. Robert Semple," in *The Hesperian*, III, 386-90, Oct., 1859; "Capt. John Grigsby," in *Napa Register*, Apr. 6, 13, 1872; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 113-15; H. L. Ford, Bear Flag, MS, pp. 7-10; W. B. Ide, Biographic Sketch, MS, pp. 123-25; Vallejo, *op. cit.*, V, 113-15; J. P. Leese, Bear Flag Statement, MS, pp. 6-12; R. Semple, in *Monterey Californian*, Sept. 5, 1846; W. Baldrige, *op. cit.*, pp. 5, 43-45. The scenes in Vallejo's home have been reconstructed from a large number of narratives, some of which were written by participants, but none of which agree in major details. Therefore, the author assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or veracity of the description.

8. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 113.

9. *Ibid.*, V, 114; T. Gregory, *Hist. of Sonoma County*, p. 67.

10. T. M. Price, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-15; W. B. Ide, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-30.

11. Vallejo, *op. cit.*, V, 116-17.

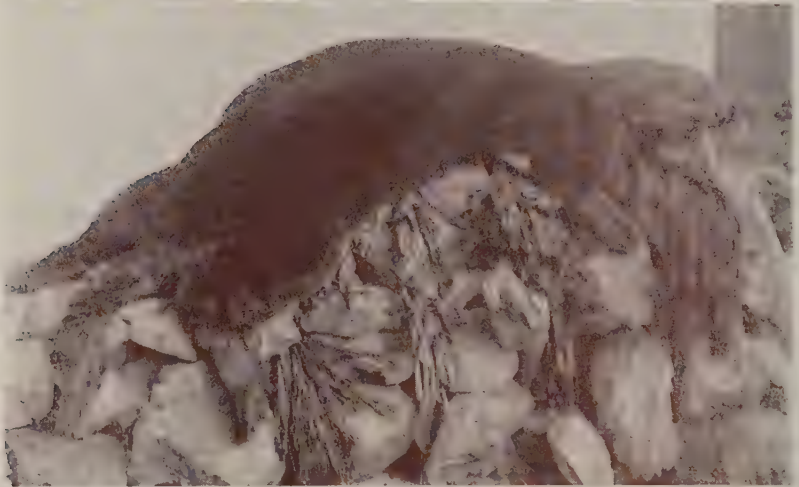
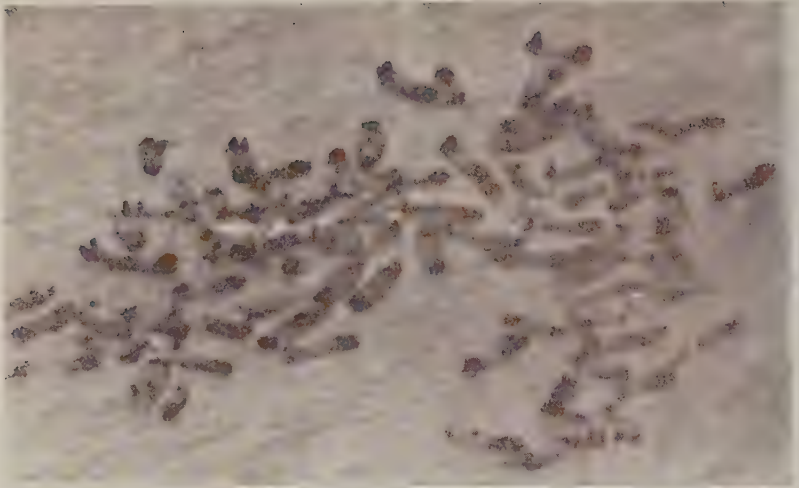
12. Statement of J. de la Rosa to Capt. J. B. Montgomery, aboard U. S. S. *Portsmouth*, Sausalito, June 15, 1846; Reply of Capt. J. B. Montgomery to J. de la Rosa, U. S. S. *Portsmouth*, Sausalito, June 15, 1846; *Cal. Hist. Soc. Quarterly*, I, 79-81, July, 1922.

13. Capt. J. B. Montgomery to Lt. J. S. Missroon, U. S. S. *Portsmouth*, Sausalito, June 15, 1846; *ibid.*, I, 85-87, July, 1922.
14. Lt. J. S. Missroon to Capt. J. B. Montgomery, U. S. S. *Portsmouth*, Sausalito, June 17, 1846; Lt. J. S. Missroon to Alcalde of Sonoma, Sonoma, June 17, 1846; W. B. Ide, Pledge, Sonoma, June 17, 1846; *ibid.*, I, 87-90, July, 1922.
15. J. P. Leese, Bear Flag Statement, MS. pp. 8-9; J. W. Revere, *A Tour of Duty*, p. 65; Vallejo, *op. cit.*, V, 126-27; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 119-20; T. M. Price, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.
16. Vallejo, *op. cit.*, V, 123-26; J. P. Leese, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-15.
17. Vallejo, *ibid.*, V, 126-28; J. P. Leese, *ibid.*, pp. 15-17.
18. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 122-26.
19. V. Prudon to J. de la Rosa, New Helvetia, June 28, 1846, Vallejo, *Doc. Hist. Cal.*, MS, XII, 228.
20. M. G. Vallejo to J. J. Vallejo, New Helvetia, July 6, 1846, *ibid.*, XXXIV, 216.
21. Lt. W. A. Bartlett to M. G. Vallejo, Sonoma, July 6, 1846, *ibid.*, XII, 229.
22. M. G. Vallejo to J. C. Frémont, New Helvetia, July 10, 1846, J. P. Leese, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29.
23. T. O. Larkin to M. G. Vallejo, Monterey, July 16, 1846, *ibid.*, p. 62.
24. M. G. Vallejo to T. O. Larkin, New Helvetia, July 23, 1846, Larkin, *Doc. Hist. Cal.*, MS, IV, 223.
25. V. Prudon to T. O. Larkin, New Helvetia, July 23, 1846, *ibid.*, IV, 223.
26. M. G. Vallejo to Com. J. D. Sloat, New Helvetia, July 23, 1846, Leese, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-66.
27. T. O. Larkin to J. P. Leese, Monterey, July 29, 1846, Larkin, *op. cit.*, IV, 233.
28. Com. R. F. Stockton to M. G. Vallejo, Monterey, July 29, 1846, Leese, *op. cit.*, p. 67. Copy in Letter Book of Stockton Correspondence in Templeton Crocker Collection, California Historical Society.
29. Capt. J. B. Montgomery to M. G. Vallejo, Yerba Buena, Aug. 3, 1846, *ibid.*, pp. 70-71.
30. Capt. J. B. Montgomery to Lt. J. W. Revere, Yerba Buena, Aug. 3, 1846, *ibid.*, p. 73.
31. Lt. W. A. Bartlett to M. G. Vallejo, San Francisco, Aug. 6, 1846, *ibid.*, pp. 74-75.
32. S. Vallejo to M. G. Vallejo, New Helvetia, Aug. 7, 1846, *ibid.*, pp. 76-77; M. G. Vallejo to Capt. J. B. Montgomery, Sonoma, Aug. 8, 1846, *ibid.*, pp. 78-80; S. Vallejo, J. P. Leese, V. Prudon, to M. G. Vallejo, New Helvetia, n. d., 1846, *ibid.*, pp. 68-69.
33. Lt. J. S. Missroon to S. Vallejo, New Helvetia, Aug. 8, 1846, Vallejo, *Doc. Hist. Cal.*, p. 81.
34. M. G. Vallejo to Capt. J. B. Montgomery, Sonoma, Aug. 12, 1846, *ibid.*, p. 81.
35. Capt. J. B. Montgomery to M. G. Vallejo, Yerba Buena, Sept. 9, 1846, *ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

NOTES TO CHAPTER XIII

1. Bancroft, *Hist. Cal.*, V, 295-97.
2. *Ibid.*, V, 297-98.
3. *Ibid.*, V, 432-33.
4. *Ibid.*, V, 539.
5. *Ibid.*, V, 568; Vallejo, *Doc. Hist. Cal.*, MS, I, 23-24.
6. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 670-73; Vallejo, *op. cit.*, XII, 289, 291; Larkin, *Doc. Hist. Cal.*, MS, V, 159, 177, 179, 181, 202, 250, 258, 304, 315, 344, 351-52, 354.
7. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, VI, 275-307.

8. *Ibid.*, VI, 308-323, 472-75.
9. Celeste G. Murphy, *The People of the Pueblo*, pp. 208-12.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 208-9.
11. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 467-68.
12. Celeste G. Murphy, *op. cit.*, 203; Vallejo, *Hist. Cal.*, V.
13. George D. Lyman, "The First Native-born California Physician," in Cal. Hist. Soc. *Quarterly*, IV, 287, Sept., 1925.
14. Caroline Larkin to T. O. Larkin, Sonoma, May 24, 1854, Larkin, *op. cit.*, IX, 111.
15. Lyman, *op. cit.*, IV, 287-88, Sept., 1925.
16. R. A. Thompson, *Central Sonoma*, pp. 18-33.
17. For an account of the Prismoidal Railway, see *Pony Express Courier*, April, 1938, p. 15.
18. W. H. Davis, *Seventy-five Years in California*, pp. 336-37.
19. Guillermo Prieto, *San Francisco in the Seventies*; also, "The Knave," *Oakland Tribune*, Feb. 27, 1938.
20. *Sonoma Tribune*: Index, January 18, 1890, gives death notice; January 25, 1890, gives news of the funeral and obituaries.



Upper: SEA OTTER HERD IN NATIVE HABITAT NEAR MONTEREY
From a photograph by Paul Fair, U. S. Forest Service

Lower: SEA OTTER, *Enhydra lutris Nereis*, killed in 1920
at Point Sur, Monterey County, California
Photograph by Samuel Hubbard

THE SEA OTTER RETURNS TO THE CALIFORNIA COAST

By AUGUSTIN S. MACDONALD

ON THE morning of March 19, 1938, Mrs. Howard G. Sharpe, proprietress of a roadside tea room near the northern abutment of the great concrete bridge on the Coast Highway some fourteen miles south of Carmel, observed a populous group of strange animals swimming in the ocean at the base of the cliff on the edge of which her house is built. Upon examining the herd through a telescope, it was concluded that the animals were sea otters. The news of the discovery was telephoned to Monterey, where it was received with skepticism, and Mrs. Sharpe was told that she had confused seals with sea otters, for the latter had disappeared decades ago and had become practically extinct.

Nevertheless, Dr. Harold Heath, Professor Emeritus of Embryology at the Hopkins Marine Laboratory of Stanford University, and William Lippincott, fish and game patrol captain, hastened to the spot and positively identified the animals as sea otters; and on March 28 there appeared in the *Peninsula Herald* a short article describing the discovery.

The interest in the return of sea otters to the California coast spread rapidly both among scientists and laymen, for some twenty-two years had passed without a single individual of the species having been seen in the vicinity, and at least one hundred years had elapsed since sea otters had appeared in any such numbers. In this particular herd, ninety-six animals were counted, while off the mouth of Torres Cañon and at Point Sur two other groups were located, totaling in all between three hundred and four hundred animals. The first assemblage was headed for Hurricane Point, in the shelter of which it sought refuge; a necessary precaution as shown by two incidents which soon occurred. A thrasher whale dashed in after them, but became stranded in shallow water. Later a single individual ventured beyond the kelp only to be pounced upon by two immense sharks and literally torn to pieces.

To protect the herds against poachers, the government immediately stationed a patrol boat in the vicinity. This was a wise precaution, for while there is a \$500 fine for trapping or killing sea otters, the present quotation for a skin in the eastern market runs as high as \$3,500 for a first class pelt.

The herd presented a splendid opportunity for being photographed as they drifted along, paying no attention to us who watched on the cliff and often diving and bringing to the surface a rock crab or abalone. The sea otter has small, sharp, front teeth and heavy back molars for grinding the shellfish which is their food. Full grown they attain a length of six feet; their forelegs are short, while their hind legs terminate in webbed flippers by means of which

they propel themselves through the water. They mew like a cat and are fond of swimming and floating on their backs. The fur is soft in texture and purplish in color; the male has a light, yellowish belly. In one of the groups a pure white, or albino, was noted, which evidently was a freak. The female carries her pup on her breast, clasping it tightly with her short front paws.

Were it not for the historical importance of the sea otter in helping to shape California's destiny in the early decades of the Nineteenth Century, the reappearance of these animals in some quantity might pass as something solely of interest to zoologists. The ease with which sea otter furs were taken along the California coast a hundred and more years ago, and the then high price paid for pelts in China, brought to our shores not only adventurous hunters of both American and English nationality, but also the Russians, who maintained their settlements at Fort Ross and Bodega Bay until 1841. It was only with the virtual extinction of the sea otter that the Russian American Fur Company retired from California.

Why the sea otter has returned to its old haunts and what its future may be commercially are questions not easy to answer. It may be possible that under rigorous protection the herds will increase, and if they do, this strange water-living mammal may be of great economic importance in the years to come, possibly duplicating the history of the increasing herds of fur seals on Alaska's Pribiloff Islands, long since under government protection and control.

The bibliography concerning the sea otter in California is far too extensive for inclusion here; therefore reference is made to but a few sources: Ogden, Adele, "Russian Sea-Otter and Seal Hunting on the California Coast," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, Vol. XII, No. 3, September, 1933; Ogden, Adele, "The Californias in Spain's Pacific Otter Trade, 1775-1795," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. I, No. 4, December, 1932; Cleland, Robert Glass, *A History of California, the American Period*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922; "The Chronicles of George C. Yount," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, Vol. II, No. 1, April, 1923; Grinnell, Joseph; Dixon, Joseph S.; and Linsdale, Jean M., *Fur-Bearing Mammals of California, Their Natural History, Systematic Status, and Relations to Man. Contribution from the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1937. Bancroft, of course, treats the subject generously, giving the names and short biographies of such famous otter hunters as Geo. C. Yount, Geo. Nidever and others who engaged in this trade over a century ago. Judge F. W. Howay, of New Westminster, B. C., has contributed a series of monographs to the Royal Society of Canada under the titles: *A List of Trading Vessels in Maritime Fur Trade, 1785-1794*; idem, *1795-1804*; idem, *1815-1819*, which give details of the trade in sea otter pelts found nowhere else.

A CALIFORNIA RANCHO UNDER THREE FLAGS

*A History of Rancho Buri Buri
in San Mateo County*

By FRANK M. STANGER

THE SITES of the Presidio and Mission of San Francisco were well chosen for their chief purposes, namely, defense and contact with the "heathen," but for the growing of necessary food the fogs and sand dunes of the upper peninsula did not prove ideal. Hence, cattle and crops soon spread southward. Beyond the San Bruno Mountains began a stretch of valleys and slopes, facing the bay and sheltered from the ocean, where there was plenty of good soil, sunshine, and grass. The nearest section of this area was called Buri Buri for the Indians living there.

The original meaning of the name, Buri Buri, we do not know. The people who first used it have completely perished from the earth, and so little of their language has been preserved that there is small chance of our ever learning the origin of this word that has survived them.¹ It does not have the form of the usual place name in the Indian original, but was apparently a word of Indian origin that the Spaniards understood to be the name of a *ranchería* or village. There are extensive shell mounds at Millbrae and San Bruno, either or both of which may have been the sites of villages designated by this name.

At Mission Dolores the place was listed as "Urebure,"² but the name came commonly to be written *Buriburi* and used to designate the general region between the San Bruno Mountains and San Mateo. Hence, it became the name of a land grant. American usage has separated the syllables, making it Buri Buri. The Spanish form was probably more nearly correct, as in the original Costaño language single words with reduplicated syllables were not uncommon. But there is little point to a discussion of the historical correctness of a word that comes to us out of obscurity and seems destined to vanish again into the forgotten past.

Rancho Buri Buri, as finally surveyed, extended from what is now the region of South San Francisco and Lawndale to the middle of Burlingame, and from the San Andreas³ Valley to the bay shore: an area of nearly fifteen thousand acres. The vicissitudes of its history under the flags of Spain, Mexico, and the United States are typical of life under those three régimes. Its story is not merely similar to that of many other California ranchos; its life cycle illuminates the progress of events, and its final exit from life is symbolic of the shattering of Spanish-Mexican institutions and customs under

the hand of the in-rushing Anglo-Saxons. Today the region that was once the Buri Buri rancho is a study in land usage, for it supports all the intervening stages of development from dairy pasture and farming to large manufacturing plants and fashionable suburban residences.

THE SPANISH PERIOD

During the Spanish régime, title to the Buri Buri land never passed from the King of Spain, but it was used alternately by Mission Dolores and the Government. Mission cattle were first to be pastured "at Buri Buri," and mission crops were raised there. In 1790, when the Mission was fourteen years old, its crop of grain amounted to 3,700 bushels, most of which appears to have been raised "at a spot ten or twelve miles down the peninsula."⁴ Undoubtedly, some of this early farming land, at least, was within the limits of Rancho Buri Buri as later described, probably near the present Sneath Lane.⁵

The Spanish Government customarily maintained a herd of cattle to supply the garrison at the Presidio, and the place where it was pastured was known as the Rancho del Rey. In the beginning this "King's Ranch" had been simply the hills around the Presidio, but the King's herd had grown too numerous for these narrow limits. There was not room for the herds of both the Government and the Mission, and the padres had complained and protested until the King's herd had been removed.

In 1797, Governor Diego de Borica, unwilling to have the Presidio entirely dependent on the Mission for its supplies, decided to reestablish the Rancho del Rey, and chose Buri Buri as its site. Surely here there was plenty of room. But even so far away mission cattle were already pasturing, and the missionaries held that their herds needed all the available space. When the Father Guardian in Mexico protested, Lieutenant José Darío Argüello, Comandante of the Presidio, was ordered to investigate and report. It was his opinion, so he reported, that the Mission did not need Buri Buri; that the King's cattle could feed there and westward to the Cañada de San Andrés, without doing it any injury. If the mission herds should further expand, he held, they still had many other places, including San Pedro on the coast, El Pilar (the region of Half Moon Bay), San Mateo, La Visitación, San Bruno (the mountains), and Lake Merced. So the Government proceeded with its plans. The mission cattle then grazing at Buri Buri were removed and a government herd purchased and placed there.⁶

For nearly two decades the King's cattle were herded at Buri Buri and the proceeds used for the maintenance of the Presidio.⁷ But trouble was brewing when Pablo Vicente Sola took over the government in 1815. The King's herd had not prospered as it might, compared with those of the Mission, and the herdsmen blamed the poor pasture land at Buri Buri. There was so much wooded land, it was said, especially in the Cañada de San Andrés, that the cattle hid away beyond the reach of the *vaqueros*. They could only lie in wait

for them and perhaps catch a few when they came out, and numbers of the King's cattle had gone wild and unbranded for three years.⁸

Be it said in support of this alibi that today, besides the brush in San Andreas Valley, there are in the vicinity of the Skyline Boulevard and Sneath Lane stretches of low brush capable of hiding a very sizeable herd of cattle, and quite impenetrable for a man on horseback. Of course, no one dared approach California cattle on foot.

Whatever the merits of the case, there was serious friction between the agents of the Presidio and those of the Mission, and something had to be done to improve the condition of the King's herd. The King's men had once taken Buri Buri as their choice, over mission protest, and the mission herds had since spread into Las Pulgas, south of San Mateo Creek. This open country of Las Pulgas now seemed much better than Buri Buri, and, of course, the King's cattle must have the best!

Under the new Governor the authorities of Presidio and Mission were brought together and a settlement worked out, which took the form of a trade. The Mission was to take over Buri Buri with the wild cattle there, estimated at 643 head, and in exchange turn over to the Government Las Pulgas with a herd a hundred head smaller than the one they received, in consideration of the difference in quality of pasture and condition of herds.⁹ These transfers were understood, however, to involve merely the use of the land and not title to it. Las Pulgas was understood to begin at San Mateo Creek, but the Mission was permitted to pasture its sheep as far south as Laurel Creek. The padres accepted the arrangement reluctantly, as they said, but for the sake of peace.¹⁰ So from 1815 until the authority of the King of Spain in North America was ended, Buri Buri was used as mission pasture.

During the Spanish régime, there undoubtedly existed some sort of structure which served as Buri Buri ranch headquarters and as a shelter for the *vaqueros*, though we have no direct evidence of it. Indications to be noted later point to the hills west of the present town of San Bruno as the "place of Buri Buri."

While Mission Dolores was never one of the most prosperous of the missions, it is evident that, here as elsewhere in California during the Spanish régime, the Mission was the most vigorous institution in the vicinity. Private ranchos had not yet come into being, at least not in the San Francisco district. The Argüellos maintained (or later resurrected) a vague claim to Las Pulgas, and may even have had cattle on it, but had no documentary evidence of ownership.¹¹ Spanish land grants in any part of California were rare, and when made usually carried only permission to occupy and use the land, revocable at any time.¹²

It must be remembered that the settlement of Upper California was entirely a government enterprise. The officialdom of Church and State, backed by the royal treasury, had been mobilized in a march of defensive expansion.

By long experience Spaniards had come to think of missions and presidios as the twin institutions of the frontier, the surest means of fastening their hold on new territory. Hence, at least during the frontier stage of development, nothing must interfere with their effectiveness. Private land grants must wait.

With this government protection and the support of the endowment known as the California Pious Fund, and with the religious zeal of the missionary padres, the missions prospered greatly. We have seen that the herds of Mission Dolores first crowded the government herd completely off the upper peninsula, and later surrounded it at Buri Buri. In the year 1812, which marked about the peak of the Mission's prosperity, it had 10,740 cattle, 10,000 sheep, 41 mules, 930 horses, and its fields produced 11,098 bushels of grain, beans, peas, etc.¹³ Cattle bearing the brands of the Mission and the King dotted the hills of the entire peninsula, but the mission brand was by far the more common.

Prosperity, however, is not without its drawbacks. When depression comes the prosperous, or those who seem to be prosperous, are called upon to bear not only the burdens of the unprosperous but their hatred as well. The outbreak of revolt in Mexico against Spain in 1810 cut off the government support that had regularly come to California, and in the emergency the missions were called upon to help. Spanish political control lasted eleven years longer, but economically California had to stand on its own feet. Among a people accustomed to the paternalism of the Spanish Government, this meant an ever-increasing dependence upon the wealth of the missions. At first, the burden was not serious and the missions seemed abundantly able to carry it. But like most such burdens, it gathered weight as time went by.

THE MEXICAN PERIOD

The Spanish period was one of missions and presidios, with missions predominating, but the Mexican period saw both missions and presidios eclipsed by privately owned ranchos. To put it differently, California as a Spanish colony was a government enterprise, while under the Mexican Republic private initiative took control.

Not only did the economic burdens of the missions increase, but the surviving members of the able group of missionaries sent out by Spain had now passed into old age and there were no young men of their calibre to take their places. In the end, the missions succumbed to the land hunger of the citizens.

That the presidios also went into decline is evidenced by the report of their condition in 1840. Monterey, the capital, had 18 guns and 12 men, Sonoma 7 guns and 5 men, San Francisco 6 guns and 1 man, Santa Barbara 3 guns and 6 men, San Diego 9 guns and 1 man.¹⁴ The San Francisco garrison had virtually become the private army of a powerful ranchero, Don Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, and had been removed to Sonoma.¹⁵

There is no better example of the shift from public institutions to private

enterprise than Buri Buri. The first governor of California to take office under independent Mexico was Luis Argüello. He is also famed as the first native governor and the first elected governor. As governor, he was charged with the direction of the Rancho del Rey, now called Rancho de la Nación, still located at Las Pulgas. But in private life, he was head of the family that had a claim to Las Pulgas based on an asserted grant by Governor Borica to Luis' father in 1795.¹⁶ A perfect setting for private initiative! A few months after Don Luis had assumed the governorship, reasons were found for moving the Rancho de la Nación back to Buri Buri, requiring the Mission once more to vacate. As Father Abella quaintly put it, the Argüellos "stayed with Las Pulgas and the Mission *malamente* (wrongfully) lost Buri Buri."¹⁷

But the Rancho de la Nación under Mexico was a quick failure. The number of cattle reported in 1822, the last year before the removal back to Buri Buri, was 711 (38 less than the preceding year). The following year, the first at Buri Buri, the number drops to 336, less than half. There is from then on a steady dwindling until 1827, when the last of the Government's cattle were disposed of or disappeared. That same year, Buri Buri became a private land grant!¹⁸

The grantee, José Antonio Sanchez, was a man who merited some such consideration. Literally since babyhood, he had served the San Francisco garrison; he and the Presidio had been babes together. Now, aged 52, with a large family, the rank of *alférez*, and a reputation as an effective Indian fighter,¹⁹ some sort of reward seemed in order. Outright grants of land in fee simple were still rare, especially in the north, but "temporary possession" was a familiar formula. Hence, at his request, Sanchez was given permission to "occupy" Buri Buri "for grazing and agricultural purposes." He took possession but continued to live in San Francisco.²⁰

A new herd now accumulated at Buri Buri. Of its origin we are ignorant, but six years later its owner, now praying for title to his land, claimed to own 2,000 head of cattle and 250 horses.²¹ There were fields of wheat, corn, and *legumbres* along the creek by the present Sneath Lane, in "Hidden Valley," and on the shelf-like plateau between the two. The "Casa de Buri Buri" was somewhere in the latter region, where it probably had been from the beginning, and a corral, historic scene of the rodeos, was a little farther north.²²

It had always been understood in Spanish territories that the governor might grant land, and now under Mexico, the process of acquiring title had been laid down in the law of 1824.²³ Beginning, in this case, with a petition to the Governor, dated November 2, 1833, which started the deliberate machinery of government moving in Sanchez' direction, it ended two years and three days later with the formal measurement and conveying of juridical title by the local alcalde.

There was, first, the question whether there were adverse claims against the property. The padres then in charge at the Mission consulted their records

and, finding evidence that the Mission had once possessed the property, thought they might have a claim. Others, Sanchez' friends, thought not. Finally, a letter to Father Ramón Abella, who had served many years at Dolores and was now in his old age at San Luis Obispo, cleared up the matter both for Sanchez and for prying historians a century later. Yes, the Mission had "occupied" the land, but under pasturing rights only, and in the end had lost these rights "*malamente*."²⁴ Hence, the property was clearly government land, *terreno baldío*, with no adverse claim.

Next the eligibility of the claimant must be established. Was he a citizen of good moral character and reputation? This was simple, for the investigating alcalde was now the claimant's son-in-law! Three witnesses solemnly testified to the unimpeachable worthiness of Don José Antonio Sanchez to acquire title to the lands he already possessed. Likewise, three witnesses further testified to a knowledge of the lands of Buri Buri, which seemed by now to have definite boundaries. Each was familiar with the limits, describing them in detail by known landmarks, each knew Sanchez to be in undisputed possession.²⁵

Finally the culminating day arrived. The preliminary *trámites* had all been completed, the Governor had issued the title, and there remained only the formality of measuring the land and giving juridical possession. The day was November 5, 1835. The presiding officer was the son-in-law, Alcalde Francisco de Haro. The official measurers, also relatives (and who among California families were not related?), were Felipe Soto and Eusebio Galindo. There were other assisting witnesses: the Administrator and Major Domo of the Mission as interested parties having property adjoining, Sanchez and his five sons, in all a party of about fifteen. The mounted group assembled at Point San Bruno on the bay shore, just north of the present town of South San Francisco. First a *cordel*, twisted and well-stretched, was officially measured, 50 Castillian varas in length, according to legal Mexican standards.²⁶ Then the measuring began.

The Alcalde produced a pocket compass which he placed on an Indian shell mound and indicated a line to the west and northwest which should be the northern boundary of the rancho. But this line would take the party over the top of the precipitous San Bruno Mountain, which seemed an unnecessary expenditure of energy. Hence, by consent of the interested party, they skirted the hill to the south. The distance thus measured could not be much different, and they all understood where the line was intended to be. After all, what was one hillside among friends?

How could they know that twenty-five years later that hillside, perhaps suspected of containing mineral wealth, should suddenly acquire great value; that their failure to climb the hill should be the basis of a prolonged legal dispute; and that all the survivors of this party should be sought out in the tranquillity of their old age by men of another race and asked to comb their

memories for every detail of this day's events? "Which way did they go from the shell mound?" "How far was it from the slough?" "How many sloughs were there and how far apart?" "Did they understand the line to be *around* or *over* the hill?" Perhaps the biggest surprise of all to some of them was to learn after twenty-five years that it had been their intent that the property line should run *around* and not over the hill! At least so decided the United States District Court.²⁷

Reaching the other side of the hill at a "pile of rocks" near the road to San José (then on the east side of the valley), the Alcalde again set his compass, sent a horseman to the top of the opposite hill to mark their objective, and took a straight line (now past the south side of Olivet Memorial Park), past "the place where formerly there was a corral" and Lake San Bruno (no longer existent), up the hill and past the south end of Laguna Alta. (This is the small lake at the junction of the Skyline Boulevard and the old Coast Highway.) A little beyond this lake, "at the point of a canyon looking toward the Coast of San Pedro and on the road thither," was Sanchez' corner. So he agreed, and promised to put there a permanent marker.

Southward now the official party turned in a straight line for the beginning of the Cañada de San Andrés, and continued down that valley to a point where there was an "ash tree on their right and a protruding rock on their left." Here was the southwest corner, and Sanchez again agreed to place a marker (at the north end of the Spring Valley Lakes). Over the hill to the eastward now, down a short canyon to the bay shore "at the south edge of a willow grove, passing the line by the edge of a small lake and just north of a small round hill." (The hill is the one that gives its name to Edgehill Drive in Burlingame, and the site of the lake, now filled in, is marked by Laguna Avenue. The line came down Sanchez Avenue to El Camino Real, continued parallel to Edgehill and along the north edge of the Winchester Tract.) Here again a corner was to be marked. The remaining side of the rancho was then measured along the edge of the salt marsh and the *esteros* (inlets) of the bay, back to the starting point. Part of the way the line was very close to the present location of El Camino Real.

The measuring was done; a tract of four square leagues, and the job of surveying it completed in one day! A quarter of a century later the prying *Americanos* wanted to know, "Was the measuring done on foot or on horseback?" One of the party insisted that it was done on foot (the distance around approximates twenty-five miles!); while another more truthfully said, "Some of it we measured on foot but sometimes we got tired and mounted our horses."²⁸

But such an occasion demanded more solemn recognition than merely a surveying job well done. The Republic of Mexico, heir to the traditions of the kings of Spain, was giving formal possession to one of its citizens and to his heirs forever, of a part of the national domain. A new family estate was being

founded. The little group of horsemen stood in solemn observation at Point San Bruno on the shore of the Bay of San Francisco while "said Citizen José Sanchez pulled up grass and stones from the ground and threw them to the four winds as a sign of his legal and juridical possession" of the land. In other words, it was now his to do with as his fancy might dictate. And thus was completed the official record.²⁹

But such a boon should not be conferred without some conditions, the violation of which should cause loss of the property. It must not be sold, mortgaged, or entailed; the owner must "plant trees of some utility" and "within one year at most he must build a house and it must be inhabited." Such land grants were for homes, not for speculation. Of the planting of trees, we cannot be sure. The restrictions as to mortgage and sale were observed until removed by the coming of the *Americano* and his law. The house was built, and in it Sanchez, retiring from the army, spent the remaining seven years of his life.

The site for the new family home was chosen in keeping with changed conditions. This was to be no mere herding headquarters as had been the Casa Buri Buri, hidden away in the hills. Foreign ships in the hide and tallow trade were bringing new wealth, importance, and luxuries to the *rancheros*. The home should be easy of access by land or sea—and on Rancho Buri Buri this was easy. The site chosen was that of the present town of Millbrae, on a rise of ground close to the "public highway," and also near one of the *esteros* that could be used at high tide for a boat landing.³⁰

Sanchez had the satisfaction of spending his last years in as much dignity and comfort as his times and region could afford. His five-room adobe house with its outbuildings, his cultivated fields, his stone, mule-drawn grist mill of the type that in the more progressive centers of California was replacing the mortars and pestles of the Indian women,³¹ his *embarcadero*, and the large herds of cattle and horses bearing his brand, all these raised the Sanchez Ranch to the aristocratic rank of an *hacienda*.³² His death in the summer of 1843 marked the passing of California's first generation. For the King of Spain and the Republic of Mexico, he had helped to push back the white man's frontier. Frontier days were now gone, and in the heyday of the ranchos he passed away.

THE AMERICAN PERIOD

Whether José Sanchez was aware of it we do not know, but even before his death a new transition was under way in California, due to the filtering in of Americans. The war and the gold rush were still in the future, but to keen observers the destiny of California was already evident by the numbers of American merchants, ship-jumping sailors, and fur hunters who had taken up permanent abode or were hovering about. Sanchez' own will is evidence of it.³³ Of the nine persons mentioned as debtors or creditors, eight were foreigners! Only Tiburcio Vasquez, his neighbor on the coast side, was of his

own race. The others are not easily recognizable in the Spanish struggles with Anglo-Saxon spelling, but they can be definitely identified. "Don Juan Yon" is John Jones, "Tomas Shoa" is Thomas B. Shaw, "Juan Copingea" is John Coppinger, "Diego Escott" is James Scott, "Jorge Foqueson" is George Ferguson, "Enrique Mellis" is Henry Mellus, "Señor Tompson" is Alpheus B. Thompson, and even "Carlos Moreno" turns out to be Charles Brown.

Three years after José Sanchez' death, came war. To some Californians it must have seemed, from the chain of upsetting experiences that followed, that every foundation of human security was being undermined. First there was conquest and rule by a foreign race: an experience always pleasant for the conqueror but, however humane, galling to the conquered. Hardly had they become adjusted to this when the Gold Rush burst upon California and then in rushed the motley crowd, comprised of rough and aggressive Americans. Peaceful, idyllic California was no more; mining, shipping, merchandising, lumbering, speculating filled the land with "hustle" and enterprise. Money circulated where it had scarcely been known before, and prices soared. Land suddenly acquired what seemed like staggering values, and the gold that men were willing to pay for it would buy luxuries hardly dreamed of before. What wonder that many of the Californian rancheros were swept off their feet?

But that was not all. Who owned the land? Legitimate land titles had been guaranteed in the treaty of cession, but the United States Government, pressed on the one hand by many fraudulent claims and on the other by the politics of "squatterism" which scorned and hated large holdings, was hard on the legitimate owners. They must prove their claims at their own expense. They must journey to Los Angeles or San Francisco, bringing their documents and their witnesses, to convince the harassed Land Commission of the genuineness of their grants. And even when that was successfully done it must be repeated in the courts. The language and the legal procedure were strange to the Californians. Capable and convincing witnesses were at a premium. "Testifying in land cases" became a remunerative profession.³⁴ What a paradise for unscrupulous lawyers!

How did the owners of Rancho Buri Buri survive this period of storm and stress? They were what might be termed an ordinary family, of humble origin, having made good in the world they knew. At least the father of the family had made good. Among his ten children, one would naturally expect a certain variety, but our concern here is primarily with the history of a rancho, not of a family.

José Sanchez before his death had seen a good many of his children's children. In the end none of the five sons and five daughters failed to produce a quota of heirs, and in some cases it was the grandchildren who took part in the distribution of the estate. There was necessarily a lapse of several years before even the first steps of this distribution could be taken. There were first nearly two years of war conditions, followed by two more years of waiting for

the organization of an American state. By that time three daughters were dead.

In the meantime an American engineer was employed to survey the property³⁵ and there was a tentative understanding for a division of the land among the children. Three of the boys had built homes on the place. The eldest, José de la Cruz, built close to the present Capuchino Golf Course, Isidro's house was on the site of South San Francisco, and José Isidro ("Chino") built in the present North Burlingame, not far from Broadway.

By 1851, machinery for the registration and transfer of property was organized, and the following year the Land Commission began its work. Furthermore, San Francisco, as a port for a rich mining area, was beginning to feel itself a city with a rosy future. Redwood lumber from Woodside was going into its construction in an effort to keep ahead of the many disastrous fires. The entire region evidently had a future and land in the Buri Buri region would be ideal for farming and dairy purposes.

San Francisco was swarming with speculating geniuses looking for opportunities such as Buri Buri now offered. Some were substantial, conservative men, not above driving a hard bargain, but in the main builders rather than speculators. Such were D. O. Mills, Ansel I. Easton, and Charles Lux. But there was also a horde of fly-by-night property gamblers, shrewd and unscrupulous, quick to take advantage of landed Californians who were either dazzled by the money value of their property or hard up for cash and in need of a loan. In the latter event, the Californians were usually not conversant with American laws and customs regarding notes, mortgages, foreclosures, etc., nor did they realize that a small loan at the current rates of 2 to 5 per cent a month, compounded monthly, soon increased to staggering amounts. Many of the Californians fell into the hands of unscrupulous men, and apparently included were some of the Sanchez family. Hidden in the prosaic court and property records is much of drama, tragedy, and grim humor. Some of it stands out even in a simple account of the disposal of their property by the various members of the Sanchez family.³⁶

José de la Cruz, the eldest son, signed three mortgages within one year on his undivided tenth of the rancho, securing a total indebtedness of \$6,620. This is apparently all he ever received, if indeed he actually received that amount, for property worth at very least \$10,000. The first of these mortgages given in December, 1854, to one George Scarpa, secured a note for \$1,820 which matured in six months and bore interest thereafter at the rate of five per cent a month. One year of this interest raised the amount of the note to \$3,263.28 and brought foreclosure. But the accumulated interest apparently did the holder of the note no good, for the property was bid in at a sheriff's sale for \$1,000. The purchaser, James Wilson, built a house and perhaps other improvements, and sold out about two years later to D. O. Mills for \$20,000.³⁷

The holder of the second mortgage, John Searle, had secured from Scarpa

a contract giving his mortgage prior rights, nevertheless Scarpa foreclosed first. Searle brought suit and obtained judgment for \$2,834 (original note \$2,000), and Mills, to protect his investment, bought the claim at sheriff's sale for \$3,000. The holder of the third mortgage does not appear in the record. By 1860, it appears, the property had more than doubled in value, various parties, especially Wilson, had made handsome profits, and Mills had acquired nearly 1,500 acres, the property of the present Mills Estate, for about \$15.75 per acre. Additional expense of quieting title may have run the total cost as high as \$20 per acre.

José Isidro Sanchez lost his tenth part of the rancho, which included all of what is now North Burlingame, on a judgment to satisfy a debt of \$1,250, owed to one Louis Vellati. A sheriff's sale occurred in 1854, and in 1860 the property was purchased by Ansel I. Easton, who made it his home.

Manuel Sanchez deeded his tenth part to his brother Francisco in 1854, for \$4,300 and 145 head of cattle, apparently with the intention of ranching elsewhere. He died about three years later. Francisco sold portions to various people at apparently about \$7.00 per acre, and after Manuel's death deeded the remainder back to his widow and son.

Francisco Sanchez had a ranch of his own, San Pedro, on the coast adjoining Buri Buri on the west, and was apparently the wisest in administering his affairs. Before the American occupation he had been Alcalde of San Francisco and had held other positions of trust. As Captain of a San Francisco militia company he had led the only military resistance in Northern California against the American invasion. His share of Buri Buri was sold in 1856 in one lot to Thomas Hayes, and at the time of title settlement was owned by Henry Miller of Sacramento. Before his death Francisco deeded his own place (San Pedro) in trust to be used by his wife during her life, half to be at her exclusive disposal and the other half to be divided at her death among their children.

The other son, Isidro, sold his tenth part, which included the present site of South San Francisco, direct to Charles Lux in 1853 for \$10,000. Lux soon afterward built his home at Baden crossing. His barn still stands.

The oldest daughter, Barbara, who married Leonardo Feliz, died before the American occupation. Her share was disposed of in various ways by her seven children.

Paula and her husband (Candelario Valencia) were still living in 1867 but had disposed of all their interest in the estate either to their children or to others. Three of their children still owned portions at the time of the final settlement (1868), one of whom was María, wife of Torribio Tanfarán. Horse-racing has since made this name famous.

Emiliana, wife of Francisco de Haro, the alcalde who supervised the measuring of the rancho in 1835, was dead before the settlement was begun. Her eleven children disposed of their portions in various ways, none of them appearing in the final settlement.

The case of Julia is unique, though she too died before disposition of property was begun. Her husband, José Jesús ("Chuz") Valencia, seems to have been regarded by some, perhaps only the interested parties, as incapable of managing his own affairs, much less his wife's estate. Among the interested parties was the firm of Wainwright, Randall & Company, "Real Estate and Stock Auctioneers," just made to handle such cases.

Mr. Albert G. Randall was "conversant with the Spanish language," prepared to give particular attention to "the preparation of Rancho property for sale," and was a notary public. Mr. James E. Wainwright was a professional auctioneer and at the same time Clerk of the County Court, including probate!³⁸ A case such as the estate of Julia Sanchez de Valencia could hardly escape the notice of a firm so strategically situated as Wainwright, Randall & Company.

At any rate, in March, 1853, Mr. Randall was appointed guardian of the four children and their father, and administrator of the estate. It soon appeared to the court that the estate was "unproductive and insufficient to pay the allowance made by the Court for the support of the family, the Expenses of Administration, and the indebtedness of the Estate," and the property was ordered sold. Appraised at \$10 per acre, under the efficient hammer of Auctioneer and Clerk-of-the-Court Wainwright, it was sold for \$7.50 per acre cash to Charles Gulliver.

The idea of investing the proceeds does not seem to have occurred to the Administrator. Some years later he reported having spent over \$7,400 for the support of the family, and for "Expenses of Administration" \$3,214.95.³⁹ About \$1,500 remained to the credit of the estate, out of over \$12,000 received.

But there were other law firms in San Francisco. It occurred to some bright mind that Julia Sanchez de Valencia had died before the creation of the State of California, hence that sovereign State had no right to appoint an administrator of her estate. Under this assumption, Valencia and his children were persuaded that they still owned a tenth interest in Rancho Buri Buri. Other parties purchased the property directly from them and were finally upheld by the court! Charles Gulliver's investment thus became a total loss and Julia's family had, by simply doing nothing at all, realized from two sales of their property. Such was the majesty and uncertainty of the law in the new State of California.

The case of Ilaria, the youngest daughter, is likewise fantastic, but at the other extreme. Ilaria was married first to John Read and later to Bernardino García. Somewhere along the line she had incurred a debt of \$1,742, for which judgment was rendered against her in March, 1853. (Remarkable how these debts seemed to appear in court just about the time the Land Commission approved the title to Rancho Buri Buri!) At sheriff's sale to satisfy this debt, her tenth part of the rancho (about 1,500 acres) was bid in by one Isaac Thorne for \$600! Within three days after the sheriff's deed was issued, Thorne

sold three-fourths of this property for \$3,000, and shortly afterward the other fourth went to William Carey Jones for \$1,200.⁴⁰

Thus, it seemed, something like a whirlwind struck the Sanchez family the moment their title to Rancho Buri Buri appeared secure under American law, and within a few months the greater portion of it was swept from their hands. By the time the storm was over some had received a fair return, some more, some as good as nothing. What they did with the proceeds is beyond our concern here. They had ceased to be a landed family and, with the passing of the ten children of José Antonio, dropped from public notice. In the final settlement less than 4% of the original ranch was owned by Sanchez heirs. Suit to quiet title was brought in 1863 in the case of D. O. Mills and Ansel Easton vs. Charles Lux et al., and final confirmation of title was made to some fifty different owners, most of them having Anglo-Saxon or Irish names.

With the closing of this case in 1869, Rancho Buri Buri became a mere matter of history. Today even the name, familiar here for a hundred years, is forgotten by all but the old-timers. For a time it was applied to a street in Burlingame, but strangers seemed to associate it with the dread disease beriberi, which jeopardized real estate values, so the name was changed to Broadway!

But the land that once was Buri Buri has continued to make history. Even before titles were settled a railroad had crossed it, the farms and country homes of Mills, Easton, Lux and many others had been established on it with improvements amounting to more than \$100,000.⁴¹ Since then most of these farms have given place to more intensified agriculture, to manufacturing and to suburban subdivisions.

Once more the last has become first and the first last. The hill country which Spanish cattle-men first used and called the Place of Buri Buri is still pasture land, while the salt marsh which they ignored completely now contains farm land, an airport, and a high-speed highway. Most intensive development is along the route of the Camino Real, between what was once the edge of the salt marsh and the hills. This bayside strip, at first merely a convenient place for a trail, gathered importance when the hide and tallow trade gave emphasis to transportation. The railroad along the same route brought a string of towns and ever-increasing urban development. Manufacturing districts, golf courses, and suburban residence sections are now crowding out the remaining farm land in this strip. For the future, practically all of Buri Buri, together with the rest of the region, is earmarked in sections for industrial, recreational, and residential purposes. The present generation has already quite forgotten the boundaries of the original rancho, for it has become merely one important part of a growing metropolitan district.

NOTES

1. A. L. Kroeber, *The Languages of the Coast of California South of San Francisco* (Berkeley, 1904), pp. 69-80; Kroeber, *California Place Names of Indian Origin* (Berkeley, 1916), p. 36; Kroeber, *Handbook of the Indians of California* (Bulletin No. 78, Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, 1925), pp. 465, 466, 895.
2. H. H. Bancroft, *The Native Races* (San Francisco, 1886), I, 453; Engelhardt, Fray Zephyrin, *San Francisco or Mission Dolores* (New Series, Local History, Chicago, 1924), p. 411; Kroeber, *Handbook*, *op. cit.*, p. 465.
3. The Spanish *San Andrés* has been changed by local usage to San Andreas.
4. H. H. Bancroft, *History of California* (San Francisco, 1885-1890), I, 473.
5. Another possibility is the coast side at San Pedro. There was an establishment at San Pedro as early as 1793 (Bancroft, *California*, *op. cit.*, I, 705), but probably for cattle only. If, as seems likely, the principal reason for going as far as ten or twelve miles from the Mission to farm was for a better growing climate, the shelter of the hills on the bay side would be sought. Besides, the Sneath Lane region more nearly fits the described distance from the Mission.
6. Letter of Fray Ramón Abella to the Governor, written at San Luis Obispo, April 11, 1834. MS copy in Archives of the Federal District Court, San Francisco, Case of U. S. vs. José de la Cruz Sanchez et al., 101 N. D. Cf. Bancroft, *California*, *op. cit.*, I, 706-8. Bancroft says 265 head were "purchased from the mission," while Father Abella says 500 head were brought from Mission San Luis Obispo.
7. Bancroft, *California*, *op. cit.*, II, 126-27, 371.
8. Abella letter, *op. cit.*
9. This was the evident intent of the arrangement. The figures in the Abella letter (*op. cit.*), 643 at Buri Buri and 545 at Las Pulgas, may have been slightly changed in copying.
10. Abella letter, *op. cit.*
11. At least S. M. Mezes, an interested party, was unable, after a careful search of the archives, to find trace of any such document. Affidavit of S. M. Mezes MS copy in Archives of Federal District Court, San Francisco, Case No. 54 N. D.
12. Bancroft, *California*, *op. cit.*, II, 414, 663-65.
13. Engelhardt, *op. cit.*, 283-84.
14. Bancroft, *California*, *op. cit.*, IV, 198.
15. Bancroft, *California*, *op. cit.*, III, 702.
16. Judgement of the Court, Case No. 54 N. D., Archive of the Federal District Court, San Francisco.
17. Abella letter, *op. cit.*
18. Bancroft, *California*, *op. cit.*, II, 591, 664.
19. Bancroft, *California*, *op. cit.*, Pioneer Register and Index, see "Sanchez."
20. *Expediente*, showing official record of Sanchez grant. MS copy in Archive of Federal District Court, San Francisco, Case No. 101 N. D.
21. *Expediente*, *op. cit.*
22. *Diseño* of Rancho Buri Buri, traced copy in *Expediente*, *op. cit.*
23. Bancroft, *California*, *op. cit.*, II, 663.
24. Abella letter, *op. cit.*
25. *Expediente*, *op. cit.*
26. *Expediente*, *op. cit.*
27. Depositions of Francisco Sanchez, Eusebio Galindo, José Alviso, and Bartolomé Bojórquez, 1860 and 1861, and other evidence in U. S. vs. Sánchez et al., *op. cit.*
28. Depositions, *op. cit.*
29. *Expediente*, *op. cit.*
30. The first American surveys of Rancho Buri Buri show the location of house and *embarcadero*. The approximate site of the house, which probably did not survive the earthquake of 1868, is marked by the presence in the soil of many pieces of broken

dishes. The late R. E. Longwell, while manager of the Millbrae Dairy Ranch, recently removed some of the piling of the wharf from a spot near the present buildings of the porcelain factory.

31. One of the millstones has been found on the Mills Estate at Millbrae.

32. H. H. Bancroft, *California Pastoral* (San Francisco, 1888), pp. 348, 351.

33. Will of José Sanchez, translated by Frank M. Stanger and published in the *San Mateo Times*, July 10, 1937.

34. Ogden Hoffman, *Reports of Land Cases* (San Francisco, 1862), p. 353.

35. Chester S. Lyman, *Around the Horn to the Sandwich Islands and California* (F. J. Teggart, ed., New Haven, 1925), pp. 286-89, passim. See also Lyman's *Mapa del Rancho de San Rafael ó Buriburi, Dec. 1848*, in U. S. vs. Sánchez, *op. cit.*

36. Data on the disposal of the rancho are taken from the records in the case of Mills and Easton vs. Lux et al., No. 349 San Mateo County District Court, County Clerk's office, Redwood City; and from the records of deeds and mortgages in the County Recorder's office.

37. It seems to have been Mills's custom to enter the true purchase price in his deeds, and this amount is also in harmony with other recorded land values at the time. Amounts recorded in deeds of private sale are reported in this article only when, after checking in this manner, they appear to be the true purchase price.

38. Official notice and advertisement in the *Daily Times and Transcript*, San Francisco, Nov. 5, 1853.

39. A parenthetical note says: "A considerable portion of what is called Expenses of Administration was paid for Expenses in procuring Confirmation of the grant." E. F. Head, Brief on Behalf of Burr and Northam, in Mills and Easton vs. Lux et al., *op. cit.*

40. See note 37 above.

41. Depositions in Mills and Easton vs. Lux et al., *op. cit.*

THE OLD STATE HOUSE AT BENICIA

A Relic of California's "Capital on Wheels"

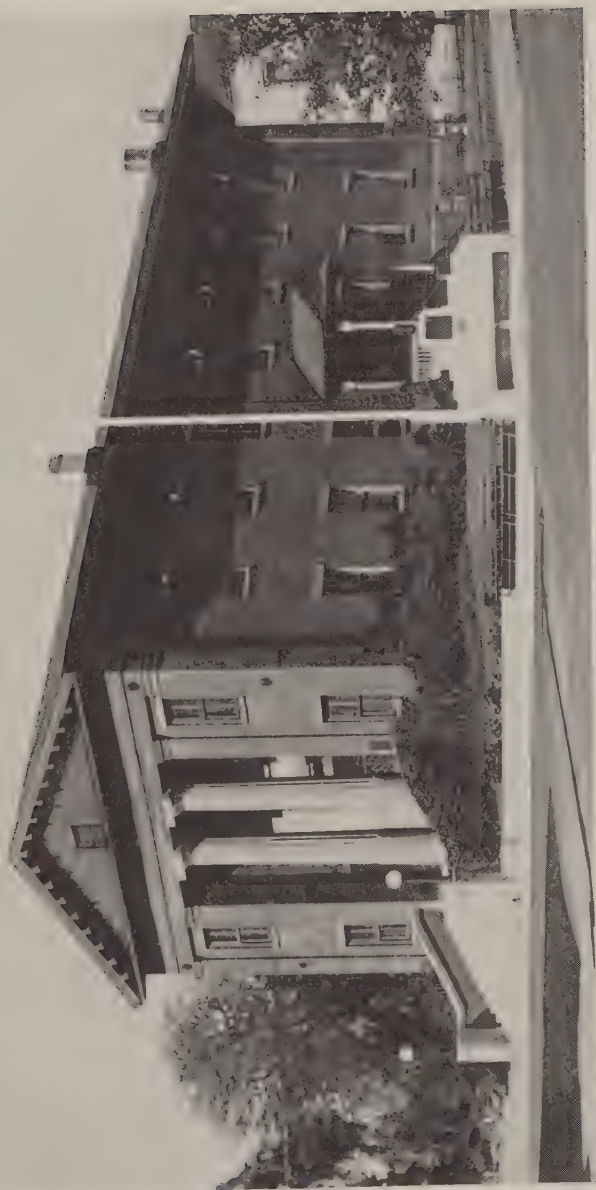
By JOHN ADAM HUSSEY

"CAMPAIGN opens to make Monterey the State Capital," "San José makes bid for seat of government"—so read headlines which recently startled and amused California newspaper readers. Shades of the "Legislature of a Thousand Drinks"! Is California's capital again to perambulate about the State as in the days of yore? Are the public archives again to be trundled from city to city in the wake of a legislature always being lured to greener pastures by the more and more tempting offers of localities competing madly for the honor of being the seat of political power? These questions will cause less concern when it is remembered that such agitation is nothing new in California. Even in Mexican days there were squabbles over the location of the capital, and the battle has been raging ever since.

As far as the State government is concerned, the trouble all began back in 1850. The first legislature, meeting in that year at San José, failed to designate a permanent location for the capital and left the question to be settled by an election of the people. Naturally there followed an undignified scramble for this prize which would bring with it added population, business, and prestige for the town lucky enough to win it. City bid against city in the race. Lands, buildings, and cash were recklessly pledged in efforts to capture the popular favor, sometimes by localities which were then and have ever since remained only bright dreams on surveyors' elaborate maps.

The most "munificent proposition" of all, however, was made by Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, the venerable founder of Sonoma and commander of California's northern frontier in Mexican days. He offered to lay out a new city on the Straits of Carquinez, to grant 156 acres of the town to the State, and to pay within two years after the acceptance of his proposal, \$370,000 to be used for the erection of public buildings. Tantalized by this dazzling bid, the people voted overwhelmingly in October, 1850, to locate the permanent seat of government at Vallejo, as the new capital was to be called.

The promised improvements not being ready in time for its session, the second legislature continued to sit at San José, but the third met at Vallejo on January 5, 1852. The desolate-appearing, wind-swept town had little to attract the members of the State's governing body. The two-story wooden State House, erected by M. G. Vallejo to accommodate the legislature, was wretchedly furnished. Housing, eating, and laundry facilities were wholly inadequate. More important, sources of entertainment were practically nonexistent.



CITY HALL AT BENICIA

Erected in 1852; used as the State House or Capitol, 1853-54

From a photograph presented to the Society
by Mr. M. Hall McAllister

It is not surprising, therefore, that before the end of the month the legislators moved bag and baggage to the more comfortable and attractive Sacramento, as they said, "to procure such accommodations as were absolutely and indispensably necessary for a proper discharge of their legislative duties."¹ But the flood of March 7, 1852, disrupted the session and rather dampened the enthusiasm of the members for Sacramento. Reminded that Vallejo was still the legal capital, the fourth legislature convened once more in the bleak white State House on the shores of the Carquinez Straits.

A month of wading through the muddy streets listening to the yelping coyotes whose nightly serenades plagued the town seems to have convinced the members that the removal of the year before had not been a mistake. On the 4th of February, 1853, Benicia was made the "permanent" capital, and thither the legislature hastened without delay. The next year the seat of government was again on the move and landed once more at Sacramento. Here, strangely enough in view of its early propensities for wandering, it has remained ever since, in spite of several vigorous and well-organized campaigns to set it again in motion.

Of all the buildings which housed this "Peripatetic Government" before it finally came to rest, of all the old "State Houses" at San José, Vallejo, Sacramento, and Benicia, there remains but one standing today—the beautiful and dignified red brick City Hall at Benicia. Still serving in a public capacity, this structure is a reminder of days when such colorful figures as David C. Broderick, William M. Gwin, and John Bigler dominated California's political scene. Its story is that of one of the State's most romantic and turbulent eras and, incidentally, clearly reveals the methods employed in the past to set the capital in motion, methods which may be used again in the not-so-far distant future.

The town of Benicia was laid out in 1847 by a group of energetic speculators who optimistically dreamed that their new city would become the metropolis of the Pacific Coast. Their hopes were not without foundations. Benicia was located on a beautiful site on the shores of Carquinez Straits. Its climate was mild and pleasant, and it commanded a magnificent view across the water to the rolling hills of Contra Costa County and the towering Mount Diablo. Better still, it was located at the head of ocean navigation and was in a position to command the trade of the interior rivers and valleys.

The prospects of the new town attracted a number of enterprising settlers, and for a time it bid fair to outstrip San Francisco as the leading city in northern California.

Aspirations to become a great center of population were temporarily crushed during the early days of the Gold Rush when practically all the inhabitants streamed away to the mines and when the inflowing fleets of the world dropped anchor and unloaded passengers and freight at the rival city, San Francisco. In 1849, however, Commodore Thomas Ap Catesby Jones

brought his fleet up to the harbor at Benicia, and a military post and supply depot were established nearby. The hopes of the now partly returned populace were buoyed by visions of Benicia's becoming a great military and naval headquarters. Further encouragement was given the next year when the Pacific Mail Steamship Company chose Benicia as the site of its shops and depot, a choice which brought wharf improvements, additional capital, and demands for labor and produce. In 1850, when the population numbered about 1,000, Benicia was incorporated as a city and became the county seat of Solano County.²

To Benicia's boosters, who were also the town's chief property owners, these honors brought only partial satisfaction. Along with the inhabitants of most of the other cities in California, they realized the advantages to be gained in securing for their own locality the State capital. As early as 1849 they began campaigning to bring the seat of government to the shores of Carquinez Straits, and the fight was continued in subsequent years. But, although they put up plenty of arguments, Benicia's city fathers were not willing or were unable to back them with any such magnificent offers of lands and buildings as were advanced by the authorities of San José, Monterey, Sacramento, and other aspiring localities. Thus the pretensions of Benicia received scant attention from either the legislature or the people of the State.³

It was not until 1852 that Benicia was in a position to make a serious bid for the capital. In the fall of that year construction was begun on a building which was to give the agitation of the city's boosters some substantial material backing. A correspondent writing to the San Francisco *Daily Alta California* in December, 1852, heralded the completion of the project. "A large, fine brick edifice has been erected here," he said, "intended for a City Hall, but it is rumored that strong efforts will be made to induce the Legislature to hold its meeting within its walls."⁴

These "strong efforts" were, indeed, already in progress. As a matter of fact, the completion of the building came at a most opportune moment for Benicia's well-wishers. A great fire in November, 1852, had destroyed two-thirds of the city of Sacramento. So great was the loss of property that some skeptics believed the town would never regain its former size. At any rate, it was practically certain that the legislature would not care to meet there in 1853. Vallejo was still the cheerless village it had been the preceding spring, and there was little prospect of its long continuing as the capital. The outlook for Benicia was promising!

Some of the city fathers, in fact, had already begun to count their chickens. One of the most interested parties wrote to a Benicia property owner residing in another city. "You may," he advised, "I think rely upon Benicia being made the seat of Government as a fixed fact. The City Council have passed an ordinance to lay side walks from the Hotels to the new City Hall."⁵

When the fourth legislature opened its session at Vallejo on January 3,

1853, it was universally recognized that one of the first matters which would be considered was the removal of the capital. The year before General M. G. Vallejo had pleaded that due to "unforeseen embarrassments," he would be unable to fulfill his promises to the State and asked to be released from his bond. The request was repeated in 1853, and hopes for a magnificent political and cultural center on the hills of Vallejo fast faded away.⁶

Not even that convenient institution known in jest as the "third house"—a liquor saloon and gaming room in the basement of the legislative hall—could cause the senators and assemblymen to look with favor upon this town whose inhabitants had made practically no preparations for the reception of the large number of people who for one reason or another followed the perambulating government about on each of its moves. Nor did the "oceans of mud" which surrounded every building in Vallejo encourage the legislators to remain to see if any improvements would be forthcoming.⁷

The question was, where to move? Before the session was a week old, bids began to pour in from the various contenders in bewildering numbers. It soon became apparent, however, that the real race was between San José, Sacramento, and Benicia. These were the cities which made the most generous offers and maintained the most vigorous lobbies. San José could not match her rivals and began to lose ground. The contest developed into a death struggle between Sacramento and Benicia.

Sacramento put up a valiant fight. Besides the usual proffers of free lands and buildings, her citizens hired a large steamer, filled it with the finest of foods and liquors, and sent it to Vallejo. Here it remained four days, its tables and bar free to all the members of the legislature. This brilliant move, which is said to have cost \$13,000, deserved better success, but Sacramento was somewhat discredited by the sad experiences of the legislators during the flood of the previous year, and went down to defeat before the more astute, if less obvious, maneuverings of its rival.⁸

Benicia's persuasions proved irresistible. Very early in the race, her mayor and common council came forward with an offer of "the gratuitous use of the City Hall at Benicia as a State House in case the legislature should deem it expedient to remove from Vallejo."⁹ They also agreed to provide suitable offices for the state officials and to pay the expenses of moving the archives and furniture. Some writers have even been unkind enough to state that one of Benicia's inducements was a promise to introduce the legislators to its "twenty or thirty marriageable young ladies."¹⁰

However this may be, there were other arguments used which were not noised abroad in the public press of the day. A letter written by the agent of one of Benicia's largest land owners illustrates how the fight was really won. He wrote in February, 1853:

I have been very busy since the first of January electioneering for the removal of the seat of government from Vallejo to Benicia. . . . Acting under the advice of Gen. Estell

& others I employed Maj. Graham to remain at Vallejo and "lobby" for this object agreeing to give him \$2500 to bring it about. It could not be done without his aid as he had the pledges of a majority of the Senators to go for Vallejo in which place he is largely interested. I also agreed to give him (to be deeded to the members, they not willing to be known in the transaction) twenty-five lots in B—— but they are mostly of little value.¹¹

In the face of such tempting propositions, the arguments of rivals were as nothing. On the 4th of February a resolution to adjourn to meet again at Benicia on the 11th was adopted. That same day an act was passed which provided that the permanent seat of government, on and after February 5, 1853, should be established at Benicia if General Vallejo should fail or refuse to comply with the conditions of his bond, or should be released from it. The General lost little time in executing the release.¹²

The change in the location of the "floating capital," as it was popularly called, occasioned a good deal of comment in the newspapers throughout the State. The *Daily Alta California*, not without a very bad taste of sour grapes, remarked of the change to Benicia, "Thither that conveniently portable piece of public property, the State Archives, will next be trundled, and there the herd of politicians in the State be gathered together in the name of office—a pious conclave for which a better *rodea* ground than Benicia could not have been selected." After expressing some doubt as to the legality of the move, the editor went on to say that, "For the present session . . . it is to be earnestly hoped that we shall hear no more . . . concerning the removal of the State Capital."¹³

No time was lost by the jubilant citizens of Benicia in transferring the archives and furniture. The steam-tug *Fire-fly* and two large scows were chartered for the purpose, and the work went on apace. A slight mishap occurred when the safe containing the State's funds was being lowered into one of the barges at Vallejo. The supporting ropes parted under the strain, and the State's hoard of gold crashed down into the bottom of the scow. At that moment, however, as at several other times in its history, the treasury was not overly full, and little damage was done. By the 9th of February, the archives had all been safely landed at Benicia, and Vallejo was left to stare gloomily at its desolate halls and deserted desks.¹⁴

With the appearance of the legislators and State officials, a new wave of prosperity burst over Benicia. The streets bustled with activity, and the hotels filled rapidly. Determined not to make the same mistakes which had made the town of Vallejo so distasteful, the inhabitants of Benicia rapidly fitted out houses of entertainment, and a good wooden sidewalk was built from the business section to the State House, as the City Hall was now proudly designated.

On the evening of the 9th a grand complimentary ball was held in the Assembly Hall of the State House in honor of the removal. A band from the nearby military barracks played to at least three score guests until the wee

hours of the morning, and the next day a correspondent of the *Alta* felt called upon to say that the fête had been a truly "magnificent affair."¹⁵

The State House in which the Senate and Assembly met on the 11th was a handsome, two-story building of red brick, about forty by eighty feet. From the front of the structure with its stately Doric columns of brilliant white, a hallway led back past four large committee rooms to the newly-carpeted Senate Chamber, which occupied the rear section of the first floor. Above, the entire second story, except for two rooms in the front, was given over to the Assembly Hall. The committee rooms satisfied a want which had been sensibly felt at Vallejo.¹⁶

The remainder of the fourth session was passed quietly enough at the new capital. On February 24, Mayor David M. Fraser of Benicia, in accordance with a resolution of the city council and "for and in consideration of the sum of one dollar, and other good and valuable considerations," deeded to the Governor and his successors for the use of the people of California, the City Hall and the lot upon which it stood. It was provided, however, that if the State should ever cease to hold sessions of the legislature in the building, the property should revert to the City of Benicia.

On May 18 the Senate and Assembly passed another act declaring that "the city of Benicia, situated on the straits of Carquinez, shall be, and remain the permanent seat of government of the state of California in accordance with the constitution." The next day the fourth session was adjourned.¹⁷

When the fifth legislature met at Benicia on January 2, 1854, a movement to have the capital shifted to Sacramento had been under way for several months. True to the sarcastic predictions of the newspapers that the first business after organization would probably be an attempt to change the seat of government, the subject was broached almost immediately.¹⁸

In his annual message to the legislature on January 4, Governor John Bigler said, "Although deeply impressed with the importance as well as the necessity of economy in every department of the State government, I feel it incumbent upon me to direct your attention to the insecure position of the public archives. The entire public records, as well as the State Library, now numbering about four thousand volumes, are kept in fragile frame buildings, without fireproof vaults." After pointing to the fact that the archives were now invaluable and that other states provided safe and substantial repositories for their records, the Governor made a demand for action by saying, "I trust, therefore, that you will, without delay, adopt such measures as you may deem necessary to render entirely secure the public archives."¹⁹

What the nature of these measures would be was easily deduced from the fact that two days later the Governor sent a special message to the legislature, transmitting a communication from the Mayor and Common Council of Sacramento and from the Court of Sacramento County, offering, if the capital should be removed to that locality,

to grant to the State government the free use of the courthouse and other suitable rooms, for the accommodation of the State officers, together with fireproof vaults for the security of the public moneys and records; to remove the members of the Legislature and the State officers and the government furniture and archives, free of charge, from Benicia; and to grant to the State, for a building lot for the capitol, the public square between I and J and Ninth and Tenth streets.²⁰

The people of Benicia were well aware of the danger which threatened their city. On the same day that the Governor transmitted the message from Sacramento he also forwarded an offer from the citizens of Benicia tendering the free use of the buildings then occupied for state purposes for as long a time as they might be desired. About a week later they went still further and proposed to donate as many lots as would be necessary for the erection of public buildings.

Other methods were also employed in attempts to retain the good will of the legislators. On the 7th of January the Senate passed a resolution expressing its thanks to the residents of Benicia for "the appropriate New Year's gift to each member of an elegant copy of the Constitution of the United States."²¹

Unfortunately for Benicia, many of the legislators were not at all pleased with conditions as they found them in the city. No civic improvements of any consequence had been made since the year before, accommodations were "very inadequate," prices were high, and it seemed to be generally conceded, wrote a correspondent of the *Alta*, that, in regard to comfort, members would improve their situation by moving.²²

A brief respite from the battle over the removal question was afforded by the ceremonies attending the inauguration of John Bigler as governor for his second term. On the morning of January 7 the proud ship *Senator* steamed away from San Francisco, bound for Benicia and bearing a large crowd of spectators and the crack military organization, the San Francisco Blues. A few hours later the steamer discharged its human cargo at the capital, and the spectators arranged themselves to view the ceremonies. About noon a joint committee of both houses of the legislature proceeded from the State House down the main street to the St. Charles Hotel, where the San Francisco Blues were drawn up in line. A procession was then formed, and, with the Union Band in the lead, the committee, the Blues, and a large escort of citizens marched to the Governor's residence. Here Governor Bigler was waited upon by the committee, and he was then escorted by the entire procession to the State House.

Meanwhile the Senate and Assembly had met in convention and were waiting the arrival of the Governor in the Assembly Hall. When His Excellency walked down the passageway lined by the Blues and was announced by the sergeant-at-arms, the entire assemblage in the hall rose to its feet. The oath of office was administered by Judge Joseph Winston of Solano County, and the Governor made his inaugural address.²³

After the excitement of the inauguration had died away, the proposed change in the seat of government was again hotly debated. Several resolutions were introduced to bring about an adjournment to Sacramento, but at first they all failed, much to the surprise of most observers and greatly to the chagrin of the citizens of Sacramento. Many complaints were voiced in the public press about certain members who voted against the "express instructions" of their constituents. Although it was humorously said that the pleadings of the young ladies at the seminary in Benicia had something to do with the way the votes were cast, the *Alta* probably had the true explanation of the matter when it charged that the people of Sacramento had been "traded off, sacrificed" in a political deal concerning the election of a United States Senator from California.²⁴

The balloting on the removal question attracted other cities to the fray. Mokelumne Hill, Nevada City, Stockton, and several more let it be known that they had certain advantages which the legislature would do well to consider. In the face of this increasing opposition, Benicia fought tooth and nail to retain the capital. She offered a substantial but yet unfinished brick building to the State for offices and the safe-keeping of the public records.

A committee of the Assembly decided that the structure was unsuitable for the purpose, at the same time advocating an immediate shift of the seat of government to Sacramento. Among the reasons given for the latter recommendation was the admiration felt by the majority of the committee for the "dauntless energy" displayed by the inhabitants of Sacramento in the rapid rebuilding of their city after its almost complete destruction by fire and flood. A vociferous minority, however, held out for Benicia. Their report was a masterpiece of sarcastic rebuttal. "It may very properly be doubted," ran one of their arguments, "whether the fact as stated in the report of the majority of this Committee, that Sacramento has within twelve months been at once a desert and a swamp, is the most cogent of arguments for the removal of the State Capital to that place at the present time."²⁵

On the floor of the legislature, proponents of Benicia waxed eloquent in defending the city. It was urged that, all reports to the contrary, any removal of the capital would be expensive, and furthermore, doubts were cast upon the legality of such an action. One aroused member went so far as to say that the law making Benicia the seat of government had been "the redeeming measure of the last Legislature," and he plaintively pleaded against again setting the capital on wheels by declaring that "we should be stable for at least a year" in order to "save ourselves from deserved ridicule."

Another stoutly said that, "Ile wished it to go before the people that it was the greater luxury that members would enjoy at Sacramento that was put forth as an inducement why they should remove there."

"Besides," he added, "it was not to attend theatres or figure at balls that their constituents sent them to the capital."²⁶

All pleas and oratory failed to sway the opinion of the legislators, however, and on February 9 a bill was introduced into the Senate for locating the permanent seat of government at Sacramento. Nine days later the upper chamber passed the bill by a narrow margin. The friends of Benicia made a desperate last minute stand in what the *Alta* describes as "puerile endeavors that would be disgraceful to a tenth rate debating society" to prevent the title of the bill from being approved, but these efforts failed dismally. The Assembly passed the bill on the 24th, and the next day the Governor gave it his stamp of approval.²⁷

No time was lost in making the removal effective. On the very day the Governor signed the bill, the legislature resolved to adjourn, to meet again the next week in Sacramento. A little after five o'clock on the afternoon of February 28, the steamer *Wilson G. Hunt*, bearing Governor Bigler, the State officers, the members of the legislature, and a committee of Sacramento citizens, plowed its way around a bend in the Sacramento River and came into sight of the new capital. At once there burst forth from the river bank a roar of artillery which kept up until the boat reached the landing. From the levee the voices of over five thousand spectators cried out a welcome, and a band blazed forth "Hail Columbia." With due ceremony and an escort of the Sutter Rifles, the members of the State government were conducted to the Orleans Hotel, where the local authorities let it be officially known, by means of elaborate oratory, that Sacramento welcomed the opportunity to be the seat of government of the State of California.²⁸

In Benicia gloom reigned supreme. It is said that the citizens were so exasperated over the removal that they would not permit the steamer which transported the archives to Sacramento to lie at the wharf without paying a fee of \$500.00. A vestige of administrative glory still remained to the city in its capacity as the county seat, and the State House served as the County Court House until 1858, when the seat of government for Solano County was moved to the more centrally located Fairfield. The fine brick building then became the City Hall of Benicia and has served as such to the present day.²⁹

During the years since it ceased to be the meeting place of the State legislature, the halls of the old State House have been used for a variety of purposes. Episcopal services were held in the building twice each Sunday during parts of 1854 and 1855. For many years the structure housed the public school at Benicia, and its rooms were long used for balls and entertainments of all sorts. Of late the public library, the museum, and the Red Cross have found shelter behind its stout brick walls. Still beautiful, the building stands today as a reminder of Benicia's past glories and the hectic days when California's capital moved about at the beck and call of the highest bidder.³⁰

NOTES

1. Bancroft, Hubert Howe, *History of California*, VI, 322.
2. For further details concerning the early movements of the State capital and the founding of Benicia, see the authorities cited in Bancroft, *op. cit.*, V, 670-74; VI, 308-9, 321-25, 472-75.
3. California, Secretary of State, *California Blue Book or State Roster*, 1907, pp. 678-84.
4. *Daily Alta California*, San Francisco, December 15, 1852. Some details concerning the construction of the building are to be found in two letters written by William J. Eames to Thomas O. Larkin, dated at San Francisco on October 12, 1852, and October 27, 1852, respectively. Larkin, Documents for the History of California, MS, VIII, 93, 95; in the Bancroft library.
5. William J. Eames to Thomas O. Larkin, San Francisco, December 15, 1852. Larkin, Documents, MS, VIII, 124.
6. California Legislature, *Journal of the Senate, Fourth Session*, Appendix, Doc. No. 15; *Daily Alta California*, January 5, 1853.
7. *Daily Alta California*, January 4, 1853.
8. [William J. Eames] to Thomas O. Larkin, San Francisco, February 15, 1853. Larkin, Documents, MS, VIII, 188.
9. *Journal of the Senate, Fourth Session*, p. 34; *Daily Alta California*, January 5, 1853.
10. Tinkham, George H., *California Men and Events*, Stockton, California, 1915, p. 118.
11. Larkin, Documents, MS, VIII, 188.
12. *Daily Alta California*, February 5, 1853; *California Blue Book*, 1907, p. 685; *Statutes of California*, 1853, 24-25; *Journal of the Senate, Fourth Session*, Appendix, Doc. No. 25.
13. *Daily Alta California*, February 5, 1853.
14. *Ibid.*, February 10, 1853.
15. *Ibid.*, February 10, 11, 1853.
16. Gregory, Thomas Jefferson, *History of Solano and Napa Counties*, Los Angeles, 1912, p. 69.
17. *Journal of the Senate, Fourth Session*, pp. 503, 534, 569, 612, Appendix, Doc. No. 27; *Statutes of Calif.*, 1853, pp. 316-17; Garfield, S., and Snyder, F. A., *Compiled Laws of the State of California . . . 1850-51-52-53*, p. 930; *Daily Alta California*, May 20, 1853; *California Blue Book*, 1907, p. 685.
18. *Daily Alta California*, January 3, 1854.
19. *California Blue Book*, 1907, p. 686; *Journal of the Senate, Fifth Session*, pp. 32-33.
20. *California Blue Book*, 1907, p. 686; *Daily Alta California*, January 7, 1854.
21. *Journal of the Senate, Fifth Session*, pp. 54, 56-57; *Daily Alta California*, January 14, 1854.
22. *Daily Alta California*, January 12, 1854.
23. *Ibid.*, January 8, 1854.
24. *Ibid.*, January 14, 22, February 7, 11, 1854.
25. California Legislature, *Journal of the Assembly, Fifth Session*, pp. 90-96.
26. *Daily Alta California*, February 7, 1854.
27. *Ibid.*, February 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 1854; *Journal of the Senate, Fifth Session*, pp. 144, 178-79, 196; *Statutes of Calif.*, 1854, p. 21. It is asserted by a writer in the *San Francisco Post*, April 14, 1877, that bribery played an important part in securing the passage of the bill which made Sacramento the capital.
28. *Daily Alta California*, February 26, March 3, 1854; *California Blue Book*, 1907, pp. 686-87.

29. *Daily Alta California*, March 1, 1854; Gregory, *op. cit.*, 70.

30. *Historical Atlas Map of Solano County*, San Francisco, 1878, p. 11; Bandel, Eugene, *Frontier Life in the Army, 1854-1861*, Glendale, California, 1932 (Vol. II of the *Southwest Historical Series*, Ralph P. Bieber, ed.), p. 312; Dalton, Alfred, *A History of St. Paul's Parish*, Benicia, California, [1905], p. 2; *Historical Benicia*, [Benicia, n. d.], pp. 3-4.

On January 5, 1924, the California Daughters of the American Revolution unveiled a bronze tablet on the City Hall commemorating the fact that Benicia was for a time the capital of California. The historic structure has also been marked by the Benicia Chamber of Commerce and the Benicia Post of the American Legion; and in September, 1936, a bronze plaque honoring Benicia's founders was placed on the old Capitol grounds by the Grand Parlor, Native Sons of the Golden West.

GILLESPIE AND THE CONQUEST OF CALIFORNIA

*From Letters Dated February 11, 1846, to July 8, 1848,
to the Secretary of the Navy*

With an Introduction by GEORGE WALCOTT AMES, JR.

(Continued)

Monterey July 25th 1846*

To the Honorable
The Secretary of the Navy
Washington
Sir

Since my arrival in this country, I have been so constantly in the Saddle and been so far distant from any opportunity to send letters to the United States, it has been out of my power to communicate to the Department the events which have taken place; and at this moment the time allowed me to write is so short and every moment of it so much occupied, I am unable to give the Department a full relation of the important occurrences which have succeeded each other so rapidly since my landing in California; however, it affords me great satisfaction to inform the Department that my time has been employed profitably, and that I have not lost sight for one moment of the great object which brought me to this Country, and that although Comm^r Sloat raised the American Flag at Monterey on the 7th inst; the whole of the Northern part of California was in possession of the American Settlers, who had declared the Independence of California at Sonoma on the 17th June last; and that had Commodore Sloat waited but a few short weeks, the Country from the [North] to the South would have been under a well organised Government, free and independent from Mexican tyranny and Military despotism.

*A letter from Gillespie headed "Headquarters U. S. Troops, San Diego, November 25th 1846," indicates that the above letter was not sent until that date because "I was so much occupied that I could not conclude it before I embarked on board of the Cyane Sloop of War, for passage to this place with the force under the Command of Lieut Colonel Fremont," and that since then he had been "employed upon service in the field, at places distant from the point from whence the Couriers were sent." He referred the Department to Commodore Stockton's dispatches for "an account of my movements and the duty I have performed, since the commencement of the War, with the hope, that the Honorable Secretary will be fully assured that I have not been idle but on the contrary have been constantly laboring in the cause for the success of which I was sent to this Country."

To give the Department a relation of every circumstance which so suddenly brought about this happy event, would require more time than is allowed me to communicate them, I will therefore state, that upon landing from the Cyane Sloop of War, I proceeded North to overtake Cap't Fremont; that upon my road I found all the Settlers very much incensed against the officers of the Government, who were treating them with the greatest tyranny and breaking every promise made when they were invited to this Country, to occupy the lands offered to them by the Mexican Authorities. The Settlers were threatened with extermination, did they not leave their new homes and retire beyond the limits of California. Wherever I stopped for a night or even a few hours, the news of my arrival spread far distant, and many came to see and enquire of me the news from their Native land; many asked if the U. S. Government would look quietly on and allow them to be thus treated, and as some observed to be hunted like wild beasts by a mercenary Soldiery. They stated, that they had broken no laws, they had violated no pledges, they had asked but the peaceful occupancy of the lands they had cultivated with so much labour, and wished only for such wholesome laws for the security of thier persons and property, as would guaranty to every man equity and justice— These hardy men asked me for advice, and begged me to give them a word of comfort in their peculiar and trying position, as they did not wish to sieze their rifles, until positive necessity should compel them to defend themselves. I did my best endeavors to quiet their worst fears— I begged them to submit to the present and allow the current of events, to bring forward the happy period when they would obtain all their wishes, and that justice which was now denied them by the Authorities of California; yet I told them, they must be prepared to resist as one man and with stout hearts, any attempt which might be made by General Castro to enforce the threat already published, that, of driving them from the Country. I made them understand that they owed it to the name they bore as Americans, and to the land from which they came to protect their firesides from the attack of the Usurper and despot, and that in resisting such oppression they would receive the sympathies of their fellow countrymen and obtain the praise of the Civilized world. At Lassen's Rancho three hundred miles up the valley of the Sacramento, I found a large party of Emmigrants about starting for Oregon, in consequence of the unsettled state of affairs in the Country, the want of security and the uncertainty of being permitted to remain upon the lands which they might occupy— I endeavored to persuade them to delay a short time their departure, and to hope for a change in the policy of the Authorities of the Country; but my advice was lost, upon reading the President's late message; the inducements there held out to the pioneer, only made them more eager to return within the limits of the President's Authority, and where his protection could be felt, yet at the same time, it made the Settlers of the valley more determined to obtain for themselves, the same protection and the freedom of our institutions.

After remaining twelve hours at Lassen's, I hastened on my road to overtake Cap't Fremont's camp which it was supposed I could reach in three days, but which having traveled much faster than had been expected, was so far in advance, that I did not come up with any of the Party until the ninth day, when I met Cap't Fremont three hundred miles north of Lassen's, and upon the borders of Clamet [Klamath] Lake— The incidents of that adventurous journey, I will hope to relate at some future period; yet I will here state, that I passed through some hardships and dangers, but having the one object in view, I found myself quite equal to the fatigue of the hardiest mountaineer of my party, and my only regret when looking back upon that journey is, that on the night I met Cap't Fremont, three of his men were killed by Indians, who had followed my trail some thirty miles— Two were killed while sleeping, and one, a Delaware, was shot with arrows whilst defending himself from the attack of the Clamet Chief, a Brave, who did not fall until the third rifle ball had entered his body— Hearing of my approach Cap't Fremont had very kindly rode back fifty miles with but a small party, which attention no doubt saved the lives of myself & party consisting [of] three persons.

Joining the Camp, we traveled round the Northern end of Clamet Lake, and took a Southern Course once more for the valley of the Sacramento. About twenty miles from the Southern end of the lake, our hunters came upon the Wigwam of the Clamets [Klamaths], and destroyed it, killing, I think, nine of them— Many articles of steel and tomahawks with the brand of the Northwest Company were found in their huts—

Arriving at Lassen's Rancho, we learned that General Castro had already issued his proclamation ordering all persons, not citizens, out of the territory; and also, that he really did intend to resist the entrance of the Emmigrants from the United States, expected to arrive in September next.

On our road down the valley, we found that General Castro was fast hurrying the crisis, which time would soon have brought about. The Indians of the valley formerly so peaceful, had become hostile, and had deserted their Rancheries or Wigwams for the Mountains, and killed some servants of the Settlers, and had threatened the lives of many whites. Arriving within sixty miles of New Hlvetia (Sutter's), we were informed, that the Indians threatened to burn the wheat then advancing towards the harvest, promising a very rich and abundant crop— On the 29th May I left the Camp and hastened forward to Yerba Buena, Bay of San Francisco, to obtain supplies for the party, then almost destitute of the necessaries of life; indeed, many of the men had not salt for their beef, and were wanting in clothing to cover their nakedness, a large number having already substituted skins for cotton and cloth. On reaching Sutter's Fort, I was informed, that Castro was already organising his force, had engaged the Indians to burn the wheat when dry and ready for the Sickle, had given a Musket to an Indian of some note to shoot Mr Sutter, and was preparing every measure and making every effort to cut off the

Emmigration, and to leave the way worn traveler, as also the Settlers, without one Morsel of Bread. The Department can readily imagine the State of feeling among the people. It would have given pain to the hardest heart, to have witnessed the supplications of the hardy Settler and his wife, when begging aid and protection of Cap't Fremont on his road down the valley; who, true to his position and the strict neutrality required by the delicate situation which he occupied under the existing state of affairs; could only give them advice, and begged them to wait a positive demonstration on the part of Gen'l Castro. My advice to them was the same, adding that a short time would determine for them, what might be almost then foretold.

At Yerba Buena I was informed of Castro's having made preparations at Sonoma, as he said, to march against Pio Pico, the elected Governor of California, whom it was rumored, was proceeding North to put down General Castro's usurped Military Authority— Castro was collecting horses from different quarters, gathering, arming and otherwise preparing a large force for the field. Fortunately for Cap't Fremont's party, I found the Portsmouth Sloop of War at Sauzalito, Bay of San Francisco. Having made known to Cap't [John Berrien] Montgomery the wants of Cap't Fremont's party, he supplied the Camp as far as it was in his power, with a promptness and decision which does him great honour, and reflects credit upon his command— Cap't Montgomery gave me every assistance I desired, with a zeal and good feeling, which has won not only my esteem and respect, but also, the regard of Cap't Fremont and his grateful party.

In Yerba Buena spies beset me at every turn but they only saw, that I came for Supplies for Cap't Fremont, in consequence of the bad treatment that gentleman had received in March last; and that I, as a private person had undertaken his business, to prevent any difficulty which might arise by his presence in the settlements. Some few knew me to be an officer, but retired in bad health; and when I passed up the country I traveled so rapidly, I gave but little opportunity for enquiry where I did not wish to be known; however, on the arrival of the Portsmouth at Monterey the officers of that ship being surprised at finding me [in] the country, and not knowing my position, made known my being an officer, which information at that time was of little importance. The Launch of the Portsmouth under command of Lieut [Benjamin F.] Hunter was despatched to carry the supplies to the Camp, which I expected to find on the Sacramento near Feather River; but had moved down to the American Fork, a small stream which enters the Sacramento about three hundred yards above Sutter's landing—

During my absence of eight days the blow had been struck— General Castro having had the temerity to drive a Band of 150 horses from Sonoma across the Sacramento, on their road to the Pueblo of San José, which were soon to return each bearing a well armed Soldier— A party of 20 Settlers under the Command of Ezekiel Merritt siezed upon the Horses and drove

them up the valley. Certain information having reached the Settlers, that plans had been formed at Sonoma, the principal depot of arms and ammunition in the country, and the residence of the Military Commandant General Guadalupe Vallejo, Don Salvador Vallejo, Colonel Victor Prudon, (a frenchman) and Jacob P. Leese an American and wholly in the interest of the Californians, Mr Merritt and his small band determined to take the place and sieze upon the persons of the principal planners of their destruction. Mr Merritt was successfull in every way— The Californians were taken by surprise at night, having made no resistance— They were treated kindly and brought to Sutter's Fort, where they were confined in Mr Sutter's private apartments, where they still remain.

After obtaining his Supplies, Cap't Fremont moved his Camp up the American Fork to a pleasant spot, where there was good grass to recruit his travel worn Animals, and the men, also though resting from fatigue, would repair pack saddles, equipage for the road, and make all the necessary preparations for the journey homeward.

On the 20th June two gentlemen Messr's P. [Pierson] B. Reading and Samuel Hensley who had been sent to Marsh's landing on the river San Joaquin, to obtain information returned, and stated that General Castro had declared his intention to commence hostilities immediately, and that he would drive Cap't Fremont and his party of Bandoleros (highwaymen) from the country; and was organizing a force to proceed against him, thus making a second attack upon the expedition— Cap't Fremont deeming that it was due to the Country and to the position he holds in the army, determined to assume the offensive, not only to prevent any further organization on the part of Gen'l Castro, but to lend his aid to his fellow countrymen, and thereby prevent if possible, the horrible bloodshed and rapine which would succeed, should the honest settlers be overcome by a superior force, for the Spaniards had not only threatened the lives of the men, and engaged the Indians to destroy the Grain by fire, but had promised their miserable soldiery the ravishing of the women, and the destruction of the children.

On the 21st June information was recieved at Sutter's Fort (now called Fort Sacramento) that a party of Californians, under the command of a great villain by the name of [Joaquin] De la torre, had landed at San Raphael with the intention of attacking Sonoma— A Party of one hundred riflemen preceeded immediatly to the assistance of the place, and the people from all parts of the Country hastened to join the party in Arms, and to support the Proclamation issued at Sonoma on the 17th June by William Ide, a Settler from Illinois, which after stating the ills under which they had been suffering, declared California Free and Independent— This paper although authorized by only a small party, was recieved throughout the Country as the voice of the people, and will be maintained at all hazards, and now that the flag of the United States has been raised, the foreign residents never will permit it to be

hauled down whatever may be the cost. About the 23^d June De la torre having effected a landing at San Raphael with a party of 70 men, Henry Ford and a small party of fourteen men, sallied out from the Garrison at Sonoma to endeavor to liberate two of their countrymen, who had been taken prisoners on the plains of Santa Rosa, when on their road to Bodega, to convey intelligence to the Settlers in that quarter, and whom, it was supposed were with the main body of the Spanish force— About 8 o'clock on the morning of the 24th, Mr Ford came up with De la torre some fifteen miles from San Raphael, the latter having encamped on a stream of water near the house of an old Indian, which is thickly covered with brush and a very good shelter for sharp shooters. Firing instantly commenced, and the report of fifteen shots had scarcely been heard before De la Torre, and his boasting party of seventy were in full flight leaving three dead, and two wounded upon the field— Mr Ford had the good fortune to release one of his countrymen, but not one of those of whom he was in pursuit— they, alas!, had been most brutally butchered in a manner almost too revolting to relate— The Californians first shot the two Americans, tied them to trees, cut off their privates, scored their breasts on either side, broke their jaws, and disjointing them with knives, stuffed pocket handkerchiefs into the mutilated faces. They then threw the bodies into a ditch, where they were found in the condition mentioned.

De la torre was driven from that part of the country, and fled to Santa Clara, where General Castro, had his Headquarters, and had been collecting his forces to proceed against the foriegners— Every falsehood and slanderous report which could possibly be thought of, was circulated by Gen'l Castro and his friends to injure the Settlers— They were accused of rapine and murder, of violating every woman they met with on the road, of desecrating churches, in fact of having given themselves up to pillage and cruel bloodshed— However such reports only served to alarm the unprotected for a short time. The defenseless women and children, the aged and infirm, soon found that security from the Settlers for their lives and property, they had so long sought for in vain from the Authorities of California, and the Spanish residents of the plain of Sonoma, of the Valley of Napa; indeed, the whole region of country north of the Bay of San Francisco, now boast of more security than they have ever had before.

Until the flag was raised and the news of hostilities with Mexico having commenced reached me, I had assumed no positive position among the Settlers in Arms; but followed and was with them giving advice and rendered them every assistance in my power, yet was ready to lend them a helping hand where any opportunity might offer or my services be useful— I had made many friends, my opinions were of weight, and to continue in thier esteem, I was obliged to be more conspicuous among them, than I otherwise would under different circumstances. Upon the news of war with Mexico, and the flag having been sent and hoisted upon the different Military Posts already

in the possession of the Settlers, Cap't Fremont and myself immediately organised the Settlers in connexion with his own force, into a Battalion, and hastened South to intercept General Castro, who fled upon learning that we were making preparations to attack him at the Mission of Santa Clara. Upon the day he commenced his retreat towards the Mission of St John, the Proclamation published by Commodore Sloat, met him at the Pueblo of San José; as also, he recieved a letter from Commodore Sloat, desiring him to give up the Country, promising him the usual terms in such cases— General Castro refused to capitulate or submit to the new order of affairs, and swore he would carry on the war hasta la Muerto (until death).

As it was necessary to obtain certain information of the Movement of the Enemy, and also to communicate with Commodore Sloat at Monterey, I hastened in advance of the Battalion with a small party, and arrived at that place on the 16th July, having been absent three months. Commodore Sloat was very much pleased to see me, but I am sorry to say my interview was not satisfactory— Comm Sloat was evidently displeased with Cap't Fremont and myself having been before him in our operations in the North, and frequently spoke of his want of knowledge of the Authority under which we had acted— He informed me, that he had approved of the course pursued by Commander Montgomery, of his having rendered us assistance and furnished supplies to Cap't Fremont's party; yet, I had been told by good authority, that Commodore Sloat had disapproved (at first) in strong terms of Commander Montgomery's action, and had expressed himself decidedly opposed to what had been done— He even had said, he did not know Cap't Fremont and would not recognize the force under his command.— During this interview, Commodore Sloat expressed a strong desire that Major Fremont should address him a letter, giving him his authority for holding his present position; and hinted at the necessity of the whole force being place at his (Comm^r Sloat's) disposal— Fortunately for us, at this Crisis, the Congress Frigate had arrived, and as I was not authorised to make any communications touching the operations in the Country to Commodore Sloat, I listened to what he had to say without comment or remark—

From Commodore Sloat's Cabin I went to the Congress, and paying my respects to Commodore Stockton, I had the pleasure to find him, well prepared to understand all the Movements Cap't Fremont and myself had made, and anxiously waiting for the moment when Commodore Sloat would give up the command of the Squadron, that he might assist in bringing to an early conclusion, the operations, which he was pleased to say, had been so happily commenced in the North by Cap't Fremont and myself— My interview with Commodore Stockton was highly satisfactory, and as nothing could be done until Commodore Sloat should retire, I hastened on my return to join Cap,t Fremont, whom I met at the Mission of St John on his way to Monterey, where he had recovered nine large guns, nineteen kegs and a half barrel of

powder, three kegs of Musket Cartridges, two tons of shot and one hundred and sixty stand of Muskets; all of which had been buried and secreted by the force under General Castro, when he retreated from the Mission. Leaving a small party of volunteers to protect the Mission, Cap't Fremont marched to Monterey where we arrived on the 19th instant, at the head of three Companies of a well organised Battalion, one hundred and seventy strong, with one piece of Artillery, a brass Gun of Six pounds calibre, taken at Sonoma, myself in the position of Captain and Adjutant. One of these Companies was the force brought into the country by Cap't Fremont, the other two, were composed of the Settlers, volunteers for the Service of the United States, with the understanding, that they are securing the Independence of California, by uniting their destinies with those of their Native land.

Since our arrival, we have been preparing for a march to the Capital of California, El Pueblo de los Angeles; where, it is said, Castro, who has joined the Governor Pio Pico, will make a stand. As also, we have been awaiting with much anxiety for the moment, when Comm'r Stockton would assume the Command of the forces, as the half way measures of Commodore Sloat are entirely opposed to the interests of the Settlers, and far from insuring a Speedy termination of the War. Occupying Monterey and the posts of the North, the latter taken by the Settlers before he raised our flag in the Country, Commodore Sloat considers, that he holds entire possession of the Country; and although he has raised a small party of Mounted Men, say forty in number, composed of Sailors, Marines, and newly enlisted recruits, under the Command of Purser [Daingerfield] Fauntleroy, (who has recieved the appointment of Captain) and has a large force of Sailors on shore in Monterey, he does not think it necessary to follow up the movements so successfully commenced in the north. In addition to this, Commodore Sloat, at an interview held with Cap't Fremont and myself on board of the Savannah, did not express himself as satisfied with either of us, and appeared extremely distressed at the thought of responsibility in any way connected with ourselves. Commodore Sloat up to this moment has not recognised the operations or the command of Cap't Fremont, and at our late interview, required that a letter should be addressed to him by Cap't Fremont, showing by what authority we were in the country, and under what orders we had been acting. This letter has not been written, and very fortunately and to save all difficulty, Commodore Sloat gave the command of all operations on shore to Commodore Stockton, which circumstance has inspired confidence in the volunteers, and already given a new aspect to the position of affairs in this quarter. We are to embark tomorrow morning with the whole force for the South, intending to land at San Diego, so as to be upon the road to Sonora, if possible, to prevent the escape of General Castro to Mexico. Should our operations be successful, of which no doubt can be entertained, the affairs of the country will soon be arranged upon such a firm basis, that California will be termed American Territory.—

Commodore Stockton, no doubt, has given the Department a fuller statement of the affairs of the Country, than either Cap't Fremont or myself have been able to do, every moment of our time being so much occupied, as to prevent our writing but short communications. The Troops under our Command, though officered by men of superior character, and well worthy of the positions they occupy, are as yet unacquainted with the details of their new duties, consequently, the greater part of the labour devolves upon Cap't Fremont and myself, thus giving us but little opportunity to attend to correspondence.—

It is a source of great gratification to me, to be able to inform the Department, that the movements in the North, accelerated by arousing in the minds of the Settlers, their love of Country and republican institutions, were the principal means of defeating the efforts of the British Agents to induce the Government of California, to put itself under the protection of England. A Junta or Convention was ordered to assemble at Santa Barbara on the 15th June last, at which time, it was intended to have declared the Independence of California from the Mother Country; which Junta was gotten up through the influence of Mr James Forbes, the British Vice Consul, who, of course, was acting under instructions. Our Consul, Mr Larkin, sent me a Courier [from] the Pueblo of San José (where he was attending to some private business, connected with the Quicksilver mines) when I was at Yerba Buena early in June, procuring Supplies for Capt Fremont's party; informing me, of what was taking place, and of his having made preparations to proceed immediately to Santa Barbara, yet, expressing himself favorably towards Mr Forbes, and his perfect confidence, that the English Vice Consul was quite indifferent, under which flag California might choose to be governed. This I considered a very singular position for Mr Larkin to assume, and accordingly wrote him, urging his early journey to Santa Barbara, to watch the proceedings of the Junta, and more particularly those of Mr Forbes— I stated to Mr Larkin, that the indifference he attributed to the English V. Consul was contrary to the character of an Englishman, and particularly, one like Mr Forbes, who is indebted to his Government for raising him from the dregs of life, and giving him the position he now occupies in Society. From what I had heard of Mr Larkin's conduct in the country, and every act of his life either public or private being so entirely governed by his own Selfish views, my confidence in his patriotism was very much shaken, and I did not feel satisfied that he would go to Santa Barbara, where by his own showing, there was, and he thought there was, a necessity for his presence— I was well satisfied however, that no harm would happen to our interest; many of the Deputies appointed to the Convention refused to act, particularly those of the North; and as neither Mr Larkin nor the English Vice Consul were informed of my movements, it was less important the former should comply with my request, although there is not the least doubt, his duty called him there, and he knew it. Mr Larkin did

not go to Santa Barbara— A Cargo arrived at Monterey at the moment he had informed me he had no private business to detain him from attending to his public duties, and finding it to his benefit, Mr Larkin purchased the Cargo, thus plainly showing that even at a moment so interesting and important to the United States, he preferred his private to public interests, and to all appearance, was willing to allow the Country to pass into other hands, notwithstanding he had warned Our Government of the danger of European interference. Fortunately Gen'l Castro's plans were so far advanced, that quick action was demanded, his horses were taken, Sonoma surprised, and the Independence of California declared.

Upon this news reaching Santa Barbara, such of the Deputies to the Convention as were present, dispersed, and the Governor, Don Pio Pico, issued a proclamation, insulting the American people, abusive of the foriegners in the Country, and declaring, that the Californians would die every man, before they [would] live under American laws or submit to the Government of the people from the United States— At this time, Don Pio Pico had arrived at Santa Barbara with a small force, which had been raised by the foriegners resident in the vicinity of the Pueblo de los Angeles, for the purpose of opposing General Castro, who to disguise his movements against the Settlers, had declared his intention to prevent the assembly of the Convention— The foriegners, also, intended to take the field with the Governor, and had contributed the sum of two thousand dollars toward defraying the expenses of the Campaign, as every such movement in this Country is called. Upon the arrival of the Proclamation at the Pueblo de los Angeles, it was discredited by everyone— The foriegners sent a person to the Governor, to know from him personally, if he had signed such a paper; and upon recieving his acknowledgment of the Proclamation, they immediatly withdrew to their Ranchos and homes, from that moment ceasing all connexion or intercourse with him. Throughout the country this Proclamation was recieved as mere bombast, and the Governor considered as out of his senses when he issued it; as it was well known, he would not recieve the support of even the Californians themselves, many of whose families are closely connected to the United States by marriages and commercial interests. The better classes throughout the country, desire to unite their destiny with ours; they care not for the Mother Country. They feel and know they will never recieve any assistance from Mexico, and that ground down by odious taxation, obliged to pay enormously for every article of necessity, that the mass of the people are deprived of the common comforts by the very high duties demanded upon every article imported into the Country, which only serve to sustain a set of unworthy idle officers, who pass their time in gambling and other dissipation, they are satisfied that their only hope of benefiting their unhappy land, is by joining the United States; thereby, at once rendering themselves free and independent of the yoke they have borne with great distress for so many years.

Whilst there is much friendship entertained by a large proportion towards the United States, it is, also, true, that there is much feeling in the Country against the Settlers, who declared its independence in the North; but this has been excited by the Agents of General Castro, who have had no other means of accomplishing their ends, than by working upon the fears of weak women and children, by circulating among them tales of horrid outrages, and barbarous acts committed by the people in arms, and making them believe, that their sole aim was rapine and murder. But as the Settlers have progressed in their march through the country, the people have become satisfied of the falsity of the rumors and stories told by their boasting countrymen; and now they assert, that in Sonoma and its environs, there never was so much security for their persons and property, nor such just and equitable law as at the present moment.

In the foregoing hasty despatch, I have endeavored to give the Department some idea of the State of Affairs in this Country up to this moment; and I hope the Department will feel, that I have not been idle, nor my Mission to California been conducted without good results.

I have the honor to be,
Sir, Very Respectfully
Your M,^o Ob,^t Serv,^t
ARCHI H. GILLESPIE

Cuidad de los Angeles
Upper California
February 16th 1847

Hon. George Bancroft
Washington City
My dear Sir

The second campaign in this Country having been brought to a successful issue, and my position having been changed, I feel that I can now address you a private letter, to give you an account of the events which have transpired in this country, since the commencement of hostile operations against the Californians.

The news of Comm^r Sloats having hoisted "Our Flag" at Monterey reached Col Fremont, while encamped upon the American Fork in the valley of the Sacramento on the 12th of July, where he had one hundred and seventy men under arms. At this time I had assumed no position with the force, yet I had accompanied it, and rendered him all the aid in my power, giving him the assistance of my military knowledge, which led to the formation of the Battalion of Mounted Riflemen, and rendered his command efficient and respectable. Upon the receipt of Comm^r Sloat's Proclamation, I immediately entered upon the duties of Captain and Adjutant of the Battalion, and the Force being in readiness we marched for Monterey. After proceeding down the valley as far as the Mukeleumni [Mokelumne] River, we considered it advisable, to

communicate with Comm^r Sloat as soon as possible, for which purpose, I went in advance with a small escort to Monterey, where I arrived upon the 16th— Having had an interview with Comm^{drs} Sloat and Stockton, I returned to San Juan to meet the Battalion, accompanied by a Company of Mounted Men, under the Command of Purser Fauntleroy of the Savannah; where I informed Col Fremont, that his arrival at Monterey was anxiously looked for. At San Juan we found several pieces of Artillery, arms and much ammunition, which had been buried by General Castro upon his retreating for the South— We arrived at Monterey July 19th— Upon entering the town we were met by a large party of officers and citizens, yet the Marines who were under arms and parading about the streets in full uniform, did not interchange the customary salute, Capt Mervine who was in command of the force on shore, having recieved orders from Comm^r Sloat not to notice the arrival of Colonel Fremont's force, as he (Sloat) knew nothing about it. We encamped upon a hill to the back of the town, where all the officers of all the vessels at the Anchorage were constant visitors. The Savannah, Congress, Levant, Cyane and Colingwood 80, Sir George Seymour [Admiral in command of the British Pacific Squadron] were lying in the Roads— Almost every officer without reference to rank visited Col Fremont and myself, even Sir George Seymour made the first call, yet much to the regret of every person the feeling on the part of Comm^r Sloat was not such as we had a right to expect. However, matters were soon arranged with Comm^r Stockton, and orders given for our embarkation on board of the Cyane for passage to San Diego, to commence operations in the South, the Enemy being in possession of all the lower Country, and encamped at and near the Capital of the Country— We sailed from Monterey on the morning of 27th July, and arrived at San Diego upon the 30th, where we landed without opposition and hoisted the Flag. Here much delay was occasioned by the difficulty in procuring horses to mount our force— The people appeared friendly, yet seemed unwilling to dispose of their animals— It had been arranged that Comm^r Stockton should land at San Pedro, (24 miles from Los Angeles) encamp and send an express to Col Fremont, who had recieved the appointment of Major (I recieved at the same time one as Captain and Adjutant) upon the receipt of which we were to march upon the Angeles and form a junction— The Enemy occupying the country between us, prevented an express being sent, and finding that it would very much retard operations, Col Fremont marched from San Diego with one hundred and twenty men, leaving me at San Diego for the protection and defence of the place in command of forty eight— Fremont endeavored to meet General Castro's force, which retired toward la Puente, upon the road to the frontier, upon the approach of Comm^r Stockton, but was unsuccessful; for Gen'l Castro finding they were pursued very closely, fled in the most shameful manner with a small party to Sonora, leaving his countrymen to take care of themselves; which they did, by dispersing and flying to their homes as quick as possible.

Sending a party in pursuit of Gen'l Castro, Col Fremont marched for the Capital, where he had the good fortune to arrive the same day with the force under Comm^r Stockton— The two Commands met upon the plain below the City, where the most cordial interchange of salutes and congratulations took place, and the united force took possession of the Ciudad, and hoisted the U. S. Flag. During this time, my small party was very much upon the qui vive, and I myself in great anxiety; for it was very generally supposed Gen'l Castro would avoid Col Fremont and take the road to Lower California, and in passing, strike a blow upon San Diego— I knew he had fine artillery— We had none—however, there were Guns lying upon the ground, which proved to be in good condition. I had them mounted upon cart wheels and prepared for service. I organized the people of the town into a Company of Militia, and soon had everything ready for a stout defence— Gen'l Castro took the Mountain road and escaped even the party sent in pursuit. Governor Pico was still in the Country, and as it was important his person should be secured, parties were sent in various directions to search for him. They were unsuccessful, the friends of the Governor were too numerous—he eluded his pursuers, and finally fled into Lower California. Col Fremont returned to San Diego upon the 18th August, having left a part of his force at the Mission of San Luis Rey— The object of this visit was to communicate with me in relation to the course I intended to pursue, relative to the offer which had been made to him, Governor of the Territory and myself the Secretary. I made known my determination by stating, that the appointment could be only temporary, and I much doubted the propriety of the appointment of Military men holding Commissions in the Service; that I did not feel myself competent for so responsible a position; that my tastes were entirely in my profession, in which I anxiously desired advancement; however, that having commenced the work with him, I would continue to the end and accept the appointment. My force being mounted in a few days, I marched for the Angeles and arrived upon 31st August, but unfortunately, too late for the Express sent overland, it having left that morning. I was consoled in my disappointment however, by the kind assurances of Comm^r Stockton & Col Fremont, that every thing had been written to the President and Departments in my behalf, and that my silence would be accounted for by the report of my being upon service distant from the place of departure of the Express. At this moment for the first time, I was informed of its having been recommended to the Government to establish a permanent Corps in the Country, but it was then too late—my name had gone forward for the Civil appointment, and I contented myself with the hope that the representations made might cause me to be remembered in its formation.

A Commission as Military Commandant of the Southern Department of the Territory, was handed to me with the information, that Comm^r Stockton's force only waited my arrival to return afloat; that Col Fremont would imme-

diatly proceed North, recruit and organize the New Battalion. I was informed by Comm^r Stockton, that ten Mexican Officers had signed a Parole; that the people of the Country had been treated with the greatest kindness and lenity, which he desired me to continue to do, but at the same time to be very vigilant, firm and strict in my Government of the Department committed to my care; and by no means to permit any one to escape, who might violate his proclamation relative to the peace of the country, which was declared under Martial Law. The force from the Congress marched out of the Ciudad on the 2^d September. Col Fremont's Camp was at this time about ten miles distant— My command took possession of the Government Quarters—

Upon the 4th Sept I visited the Congress for the purpose of recieving funds, which had been required for the Military Expenditures of the Territory— I returned to town upon the 5th with \$20,000 accompanied by an Escort. Rumors of a General rising of the people now began to be circulated, and a night attack upon my quarters threatened, for the purpose of robbing the money just brought up, which had excited the cupidity of a set of Sonoreño Gamblers, who supposed they could overcome my small force, seize the money and escape to Sonora— A reinforcement came in from Col Fremont's Camp after the night of the 6th, and no doubt prevented the attempt.

(To be continued)

NEW MEMBERS

NAME	ADDRESS	PROPOSED BY
Alameda County Library	Oakland, Calif.	Miss Stella Huntington
Allen, Edward W.	Seattle, Wash.	Mr. H. R. Wagner
Bauer, Harry J.	Los Angeles	Mr. James B. Black
Beasly, Mrs. William A.	Berkeley, Calif.	Miss Stella Huntington
Bixby, Mrs. Fred H.	Long Beach	Mr. Allen L. Chickering
Chickering, Sherman	San Francisco	Mr. Allen L. Chickering
McNear, F. W., Jr.	San Francisco	Mr. E. A. Wiltsee
Morley, Mrs. Walter S.	Los Gatos, Calif.	Mrs. Theodore J. Hoover
O'Neill, Capt. R. E.	San Francisco	A. T. Leonard, Jr., M.D.
Potter, Mrs. Elizabeth G.	Piedmont, Calif.	Miss Dorothy H. Huggins
Steele, Mrs. William F.	Pescadero	Mrs. Theodore J. Hoover
Wiel, Samuel C.	San Francisco	Mr. Edgar Kahn

MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY

The Society held a luncheon meeting at the Hotel Sir Francis Drake on Tuesday, June 21, 1938, at which Mr. John A. Hussey spoke on the career of Talbot H. Green, for whom Green Street was named, whose true name was Paul Geddes. Mr. Hussey gave a detailed account of Geddes from the time of his defalcation, which caused him to conceal his identity, through his rather meteoric career as Green in San Francisco, to the close of his life. Green occupied such a prominent position in San Francisco that he was brought into contact with all the outstanding residents of his time. A number of letters were read which gave interesting information concerning these people and their relations to Geddes during and after his San Francisco existence as Green.

There were fifty-four members and guests present.

As usual, no luncheon meeting was held in July.

The Society met for lunch on Tuesday, August 23, 1938, at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel. Mr. Ernest A. Wiltsee spoke on the "Gold Rush Steamers"; giving a detailed history of the inception of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, with its fortuitous relation to the beginning of the Gold Rush, and outlining the history of each of its competitors and the efforts made to meet that competition. The difficulties and dangers to the travelers, the efforts for speed, the advertising of relative safety, and the speed and comfort of the different routes were all touched upon. The dominant figures of the industry, Law, Garrison and Vanderbilt, and their methods and achievements were noted. Mr. Wiltsee laid stress upon William Walker's contact with and influence upon steamer transportation during his ascendancy in Nicaragua, and also made brief references to the overland stage, the pony express, the telegraph and the railroad, agencies that curtailed and finally ended the dominant position of the steamers.

There were sixty-eight members and guests present.

ANSON S. BLAKE

GIFTS RECEIVED BY THE SOCIETY

June 1, 1938, through August 31, 1938

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

From MR. ANSON S. BLAKE—*British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, April, July, and October, 1937; January and April, 1938.

From THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA—*Coast and valley towns of early California*: No. 5—Santa Cruz, text by George Tays; No. 6—Los Angeles, text by J. Gregg Layne; No. 7—Marysville, text by Earl Ramey.

From MRS. E. D. COBLENTZ—Lewis, Oscar, *The big four; the story of Huntington, Stanford, Hopkins, and Crocker, and of the building of the Central Pacific*, New York: Knopf, 1938.

From MISS MARGARET C. DOWLING—Dowling, William Thomas, *Song of the Contra Costa hills and stories told a child*, S. F.: Recorder Press, 1937.

From MR. LESLIE J. FREEMAN—Freeman, Leslie J., *The Estudillos of San Leandro* [San Leandro, 1938].

From MISS STELLA HUNTINGTON—U. S. Works Progress Administration, *Bibliography of California fiction, poetry, drama*, Oakland, 1938. (Mimeographed.) 3 vols.

From MR. JAMES LAYDEN—Colligan, James A., *The life of Father Magín Catalá* [San Francisco: St. Ignatius College, n. d.]

From MRS. LAURA BRIDE POWERS—Powers, Laura Bride, *The story of the old missions of California*, San Francisco: Wm. Doxey, 1893 (autographed first ed.).

From U. S. WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION—Historical Records Survey, *Inventory of the county archives of California, No. 42, San Mateo County*, June, 1938 (mimeographed); *The opportunity for pictorial art in modern medicine: an example in San Francisco* [1938]; San Francisco Theatre Research, *Vols. I-III, First Series*, S. F., 1938 (mimeographed).

From MR. HENRY R. WAGNER—[Clemens, Samuel L.], *The Washoe giant in San Francisco; being hitherto uncollected sketches by Mark Twain*, S. F.: George Fields, 1938; Harte, Bret, *The heathen Chinee*, S. F.: John Henry Nash, 1934; Phillips, Catherine Coffin, *Cornelius Cole*, S. F.: John Henry Nash, 1929; *idem*, *Portsmouth Plaza*, S. F.: John Henry Nash, 1932; Prieto, Guillermo, *San Francisco in the seventies*, S. F.: John Henry Nash, 1938.

From MISS CATHARINE M. WOOD—Wood, Catharine M., *Palomar from tepee to telescope* [San Diego: Frye & Smith, Ltd., 1937].

PICTURES AND MAPS

From ACME LUMBER COMPANY—Maps: Puget Sound and Gray's Harbor, 1891; Sectional map of Oregon, 1891; California, 1889; Bay of San Francisco, 1890; World; San Francisco, 1889; United States, Canada and Northern Mexico, 1889.

From MR. ALBERT M. BENDER—Colored lithograph of Yosemite Valley, by Charles Nahl; large oil painting of Yosemite Valley, 1874, by William Hahn; photograph of President William H. Taft, autographed for Edward F. Delger; political cartoon: "Can any white voters afford to vote for Ah-Sing Gorham . . ."

From MR. WALTER W. BRADLEY—Photographs (2): Cabins of John H. Clark and G. C. Ingram, Placerville, 1855-56; Placerville, 1855-56.

From MR. HARRY J. BREEN—Photographs (4) of burning of Baldwin Hotel, S. F., Nov. 24, 1898.

From MRS. HENRY H. LISSNER—Photographs: Mr. Moses Meyer; Mrs. Moses Meyer.

From MRS. JESSIE MOORE LOVERIDGE—Copies of photographs: Col. Orlando Hurley Moore; Col. Orlando H. Moore and Staff; 17th Infantry, U.S.A., Fort Douglas, Utah, 1881.

From MR. EUGENE McCARTHY—Framed portrait (enlarged photograph) of Dr. Richard Maxwell.

From MR. T. J. MCINERNEY—Colored prints: Meeting of bear and stage coach at Mountain House, T. J. McInerney driving (1896); "Horse Trader."

From CAPT. R. E. O'NEILL—Photographs (copies): Vessels *China*, *City of Pekin*, *Colorado*, *Constitution*, *Henry Chauncey*, *Japan*, *Montana*, *Rio de Janeiro*, *Sacramento*, *Senator*, *Tennessee*; General Andrés Pico; Governor Pio Pico; Russian church at Fort Ross; three views of Mission La Purisima.

From MR. S. I. WORMSER—Photographs (framed): N.W. corner of California and Montgomery Sts., S. F., 1867; Ferry Boat, S. F. Bay, 1867; California Street, 1856; What Cheer House; Broadway Wharf, 1867.

MISCELLANEOUS

From MR. ALBERT M. BENDER—Commission of G. E. DeGolia as captain of University of California cadets, 1877 (framed).

From MRS. S. BRAY—Typewritten copy of letter from F. E. Kellogg, Platte Crossing, July 5, 1846.

From MR. EDWARD D. CERRUTI—Raffle ticket, Casey's Saloon, San Andreas, Calaveras Co.

From MR. ROBERT E. COWAN—Broadside: Mass Meeting, S. F., April 3, 1892, for removal of Pest House.

From MRS. MARIE ANNA JACKSON DRAY—Souvenir of Panama-Pacific International Exposition made from tie of Panama Railroad, 1852.

From MR. JOHN D. GALLOWAY—Typewritten copy of "Oration of Hon. Thomas Fitch . . . in Memory of William C. Ralston."

From MR. EUGENE McCARTHY—Deed to Lot No. 9 of Lot 105, San Francisco, 1849.

From MR. N. J. MALVILLE—Stock certificates: Mechanics' Gold, Silver and Copper Co., 1873; Cocheco Gold and Silver Mining Co., 1863; Sonoma College Association, 1864.

From MR. E. G. SCHMIEDELL—Musket, probably used by the Home Guard in San Francisco during the Civil War.

From MR. WYLAND STANLEY—Menu of Baldwin Hotel, S. F., New Year's, 1892; Newspapers: *Argonaut*, S. F., June 3, 1882, July 3, 24, and Oct. 2, 1886; *Music and Drama*, S. F., Dec. 12, 1885; S. F. *Chronicle*, Dec. 29, 1880, Aug. 24, Sept. 21, Dec. 5, 6, 1881, Oct. 23, 25, 1882, April 23, Aug. 16, 1883; *Daily Bulletin* Supplement, April 19, 1884; S. F. *Morning Call*, May 4, 1887; *Call* Supplement, March 20, 1884; *Daily Exchange*, S. F., Sept. 22, 1877; *Pacific Town Talk*, S. F., Nov. 3, 1894.

From MR. DOUGLAS S. WATSON—Photostatic copy of New York *Herald*, Aug. 19, 1848; list of lot owners of Laguna Survey, San Francisco, and photostat of Map of the Survey.

From MISS LOTTIE G. WOODS—Newspaper: *Weekly Mail*, Stockton, April 21, 1906.

LOANS

From MR. HARRY J. BREEN—Field glass used by Prof. George Davidson, 1874-75, in the California Geodetic Survey; 2 cut spikes from the concrete blocks on Mt. Santa Lucia on which instruments were set to take observations of total eclipse in 1885.

PERSONALIA AND MARGINALIA

To devote this page to the announcement of new books may seem unusual, but when four books relating to vital periods of California history are about to or have made their appearance their advent must be noticed, even though the Western History Check List must be omitted for lack of space.

First of all there is *The Big Four*, written by Oscar Lewis, Secretary of the Book Club of California, and published by Knopf after being serialized in the *Atlantic Monthly*, which deals with those virile personalities, the builders of the Central Pacific: Crocker, Stanford, Huntington and Hopkins. This delightfully entertaining and instructive group of interlaced biographies is on the "must read" list and is one of the most important items of Californiana to be published in recent years. It is a safe prediction that *The Big Four* will come to be regarded as the classic in life histories of the railroad builders.

In this and the last issue of the *Quarterly* are printed installments of the Gillespie Letters, a rare find which Mr. George Walcott Ames, Jr., fortunately uncovered in the musty files at Washington. Gillespie goes into great detail in these reports to his superiors and throws much light upon the attitude of American officers toward events in the Conquest of California. This, their first publication, may revive the age-long controversy regarding the part played at the time by Frémont.

The Grabhorn Press of San Francisco has been engaged in printing a book for Mr. E. A. Wiltsee, Vice-President of the Society, which will be released shortly. "Gold Rush Steamers" is the title. Like Mr. Wiltsee's book, *The Pioneer Miner and the Pack Mule Express*, this new volume goes into a subject about which its author is particularly fitted to write.

Society members will be glad to hear that Mr. Carl I. Wheat, formerly editor of the *Quarterly*, has returned to San Francisco and that he will again become a member of the Publication Committee.

During the last year there have appeared in the *Quarterly* a number of installments of "The Continuation of the Annals of San Francisco," as compiled from contemporary newspapers and periodicals by Miss Dorothy H. Huggins. These are now to be issued in book form, with illustrations and an index. The book will contain about 150 pages, covering the period from June, 1854, until December 31, 1855. An announcement giving details and the subscription price of this valuable diary of events will be mailed to members shortly.

The Publication Committee will also offer for subscription in book form the Larkin material which Dr. Robert A. Parker so ably edited and annotated for recent *Quarterlies*. There will be an introduction or foreword by Prof. Herbert Eugene Bolton, of the University of California, and the book will contain approximately 100 pages with illustrations and a map. The announcement respecting it will go forward at the same time as that mentioned above. The larger part of the text of this book has to do with the formative years of Thomas O. Larkin's life before he sailed for California. It is therefore regarded as highly important to a complete understanding of the character of the man who represented the United States at Monterey from 1842 until 1846.